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ISIS AND OSIRIS

ISIS AND OSIRIS

by

LAWRENCE HYDE

*Author of "The Learned Knife"
and "The Prospects of Humanism"*

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PREFACE

THE appearance of this work calls for a few words of explanation. As long ago as 1924 I conceived the somewhat ambitious idea of writing a trilogy, the three loosely associated sections of which were to be concerned with Science, Humanism and Religion. The first two volumes were duly completed, and published under the titles of *The Learned Knife* (1928) and *The Prospects of Humanism* (1931). Both are now out of print. Further, I record with much regret the fact that the firm of Gerald Howe, which rendered me an invaluable service by placing their faith in the work of an entirely unknown author, have since then unfortunately gone out of existence.

So many years have now passed, however, since these two books were first printed that I have thought it desirable, before proceeding to their sequel, to state their argument again in a new form, which embodies the results of much further reflection upon the themes with which they deal. What it amounts to, in fact, is that I am taking the step of launching my original project anew in the momentous era which has been initiated for us by the overpowering events of the Second World War. The present essay is, then, offered to the reader, as a philosophical introduction to a further volume which will, I hope, be published shortly under the title of *The Nameless Faith*, and by which the whole undertaking will finally be completed.

LAWRENCE HYDE

Reigate, Surrey
1946.

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PART ONE

OSIRIS



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

I. *The Without and the Within*

THE theme of this book is the relation between the interior and the exterior aspects of the universe, between the subjective world of being and the objective world of objects and structures. Classically they are symbolized by the great Egyptian figures of Isis and Osiris, the two extremes between which all manifestations find their place. The one, the Great Mother, represents substance, ~~being~~, inwardness, love, inspiration and mystery; the other, the Mighty Father, expression, form, action and power. Fundamentally the two are one. And out of their union comes the child Horus, the created cosmos. Or, in Eastern terminology, the action of *rajas* upon *tamas* produces *sattva*, or rhythm.

There will be no need to stress the fact that, broadly speaking, it is the West that is primarily concerned with the objective element in our experience and the East with the subjective. In the occident we seek to control life by concentration in the world of outward and visible forms; in the orient men turn their minds first of all inwards that they may establish contact with that Reality of which the senses know only the shadow and the reflection.

Nor is it less evident that the first path exposes the soul to the dangers of materialism and phenomenism, the second to that of acosmism—denial in one form or another of the significance and worth of the outer universe.

We are living in an age in which a synthesis between these two tendencies is being sought with great seriousness, both by western and eastern thinkers who have become aware of the limitations of their one-sided philosophies. The key to liberation and creativeness lies in a true reconciliation between the extraverted and the introverted modes of consciousness—if only humanity can contrive to find it in the midst of that confusion of interpretations, doctrines and standards in which we are today involved on every plane of thought.

But the difficulties which confront the oriental in this respect do not concern us in these pages. The present work is written almost entirely from the point of view of, and in relation to, the West.

And it resolves itself naturally into an attempt to compensate for our characteristic bias towards materialism—just as, in the opposite direction, there are eastern thinkers who are engaged in exploring certain objective possibilities which have been traditionally neglected in the East.

Our own struggle is all too evidently with our bondage to the visible world. The root of the matter lies clearly enough in our post-Renaissance exaltation of the natural at the expense of the spiritual man, in the substitution of human for transcendental standards in every department of life. But it does not follow, of course, that if we come again to acknowledge the claims of the Eternal it must necessarily be in terms of accepted traditional forms. For in this matter there is surely a gesture to be made which is properly consonant with the age in which we are living. The corrective of a perverse Modernism must itself be fully modernistic in character.

We have here a problem which can be treated from several different angles according to the standpoint of each particular observer—historical, philosophical, psychological, ethical as the case may be. In this study I am principally concerned with working it out in intellectual terms. The view which I wish to advance is that realistic thinking in the more serious sense of the term can be ensured only by a quickening of the deeper spiritual nature—in other words, that we can see clearly into life only out of the depths within.

The negative aspect of this situation is a fight against the insidious simplifications and misrepresentations of rationalism, the tendency of which is always towards emphasizing the more superficial, and most easily manipulated, elements in our knowledge at the expense of others which lie further within, and cannot be controlled by the same methods of thought. And since the supreme expression of this attitude in our modern culture is evidently our scientific technique in dealing with life, I have deemed it appropriate to limit the criticism of mechanistic thinking which I am advancing in this book largely to an examination of the scientist's approach to experience. For this involves by implication the evaluation of a far wider range of manifestations, which could not be discussed directly in a work of this scope.

The fact that the philosophy on which I am here taking my stand is fundamentally religious brings with it at least one advantage. It is a commonplace that in any discussion the radical issues are brought into relief only through the mutual confrontation of extremes. A criticism of science—or what might perhaps better be termed "scientism"—which is put forward by a thinker whose sympathies are mildly idealistic may, perhaps, be effective in certain directions; but it will not bring the problem into focus in

the same definite fashion. To know anything properly we must have a clear notion of what it is not. And what science is not is indeed no negligible quantity!

The achievements of modern science are obviously enormous. But at the same time it is no less apparent that we cannot escape the obligation, at this critical moment in our history, to consider very carefully just to what they commit us, both for good and ill. And here I would like to make it clear at the very beginning of this enquiry that I have the deepest respect for all legitimate scientific investigation. If in these pages I am critical of the scientist's attitude to knowledge, this is only when we become involved with the *abuse* of this particular way of thinking, and with erroneous views of the place occupied by scientific truth in the wider scheme of things.

When we consider science from this standpoint we cannot fail to perceive that we have paid a serious price for our extreme concentration upon the objective realm. For in the process we have opened the door to sensationalism; we have cut ourselves off from the deeper roots of our being; we have placed ourselves at the mercy of scepticism and relativism; and we have developed a vast system of technics without building up any corresponding moral resources to ensure its proper application.

All this is today widely recognized. But the vital question is our conception of the means to which we should resort in order to bring this nightmare to an end. And here we are confronted with two sharply opposed schools of thought, one scientific, the other religious, in character. The representatives of the first take their stand upon the principles of positivism. So impressive are the results of the great Experiment conducted by the moderns during the last three centuries that thousands of minds today, and among them many of the most influential, are convinced that it is only by the application of scientific principles in ever wider fields that our chaotic and unhappy civilization will eventually be saved. The future, on this view, is with our technically trained sociologists, biochemists, psychologists and eugenists who, if we will but give them a chance, are capable of creating for us a new and wonderful world in which our descendants will find fulfilment and happiness. What we need is not less, but more, science.

And yet just at the moment when this philosophy is at its peak we find that another group of people, by far less numerous, yet whose convictions and testimony are no less significant, are becoming ever more deeply persuaded that—while the contributions of science must certainly have an enormously important place in our scheme of things—there is absolutely no hope for humanity unless we can learn to balance our extreme concern with scientific knowledge by an equally serious concentration upon the realm of the

subjective, upon that inner sphere of being which, as the spiritual masters have always taught, provides the key to all external and visible processes.

Outside and inside are one, and indispensable to one another; on this one must insist. And yet their respective claims upon us are not of the same order. For although the Without and the Within are in one sense equal in significance, the fact remains that it is the second which gives us command over the first. Although the Word is impotent until it is made flesh, and an idea has but incomplete reality until it has received embodiment, we cannot escape the necessity of becoming established in the Invisible before we can act with effect in the realm of space and time. "Seek ye *first* the Kingdom of Heaven. . . ." Power can be controlled only from its source. And its source lies ever behind that Veil with which the Supreme Priestess jealously guards her Mysteries. All that appears in the realm of the manifested has its origin in the unmanifested. He alone is master of matter who has become inwardly established in the realm of Spirit. The mystical¹ lies within the cosmos as its potent and informing principle. Before we can truly act we must first know. And to "know" in this deeper sense is to be inwardly identified with the indwelling Life. This means the transcendence of the world of space and time, re-birth in the Eternal. Then, and then only, do all manifestations appear for what they really are.

Such a new orientation calls, however, for many severe adaptations, all of which are disconcerting, distasteful or unfamiliar to our westernized, hyper-objectified, extraverted and restless occidental minds. It means looking at least in one respect for guidance to the East (or to eastern wisdom in so far as it is manifested in the West), which has ever possessed a supreme knowledge of the inside, as contrasted with the outside, of the universe. It means soul knowledge and spiritual science as compared with achievements in the rationalistic realm. It means a transition from the conceptual to the symbolic, from the logical to the alogical, from science to mysticism. It means the Unseen as the correlative of the Seen. It means understanding of and control over self as contrasted with understanding of and control over things. It means inwardness instead of outwardness, substance instead of form, spirit instead of matter, Night instead of Day. In a word the transition from Osiris to Isis.

This not because we shall be so foolish as to swing across to the opposite extreme and desert the phenomenal for the noumenal, but because we sorely need to cultivate introversion for a season in order to balance our excess in the other direction. While, as already suggested, in the East the emphasis is exactly reversed.

Now what makes this realization, which is steadily deepening

¹ For a definition of this fundamentally important term see Chapter II, p. 27.

in the West, of peculiar interest is the fact that science itself, which initiated its researches with the robust and matter-of-fact assumption that Nature lay there before us, outside the frontiers of mind, and that our task was simply that of finding out what characteristics it possessed independently of our hopes, fears and wishes, is now discovering as it advances that the subjective element in our experience of the cosmos must be reckoned with to an ever-increasing degree. In the first place men of science are coming to perceive that our thought processes even in this sphere are psychologically conditioned to a disquieting extent; we can no longer safely consider our reason in independence of our unconscious depths—a fact which has, of course, immense significance for the future of rationalism. And in the second place they are discovering that the ultimate structure of matter seems to be far more closely akin to that of mind than they had originally expected. And then in the third place they are beginning to realize that in any case the subject-matter of their enquiries, physical nature, exists within a vast Ambient of supraphysical being to which their attention is being insistently directed by the surprising and puzzling phenomena of spiritism, occultism and telepathy. In other words, the bottom is rapidly falling out of the whole traditional materialistic and phenomenalist scheme—with the consequence that the values of subjective thought in the realm of poetry and religion can no longer be neglected as they have been in the past.

2. The Problem of Interpretation

But the awakening misgivings of the men of science are not for us the really significant point. We must keep clearly in mind the fact that the really important contributions towards this problem of re-orientation will not be made by those positivists among us who are beginning somewhat vaguely to realize that their accustomed assumptions are failing them and that the river down which they have been so placidly floating threatens to open out into a vast and unknown sea. It is true enough that a number of modern thinkers are doing a valuable work in defining, from *within* the sphere of scientific thought, the character of the frontiers which it shares with a wider region beyond. But their contributions are largely negative. They are simply recording the disturbances and irregularities produced in their own field of knowledge by factors operating in what is to them still an unknown dimension.

No, if we are seeking real enlightenment on these perplexing questions we must turn to those who are naturally at home in this field, and who speak to us out of an immediate knowledge of the subjective mode of being, people to whom intuition is more natural than logic, quality more easily comprehensible than quantity,

emotion more familiar than discursive thought, and who are moving outwards from the centre rather than inwards from the periphery.

In other words, we must transform and transvalue the whole realm of our accepted assumptions and categories in the light of a deepened interior realization. We must learn to think and act anew from a more profound and a more transcendental level of consciousness. While retaining the precious objectivity of the western mind in all its completeness we must at the same time penetrate very much further into an interior sphere of being, from within which all that we undertake in the hard, bright and immensely significant world of daylight consciousness will present itself to us under a widely different and more spiritual aspect.

Such an undertaking, however, cannot but involve us in a great deal of perplexity and misunderstanding. For the language of those who are centred in the Within is naturally strange to the man of science, and the symbols which they employ remain for a long time incomprehensible and obscure. While to make matters worse they are usually as helpless in the world of logic and fact as is the rationalist in that of the transcendental.

The problem of making intelligible and illuminating statements in this field has always presented serious difficulties. The realm of poeticized philosophy is one in which it is notoriously hard to move with certainty and assurance—as anyone who has studied the works of such writers as Goethe, Schiller, Coleridge, Nietzsche, Soloviev, Santayana or Whitehead will be well enough aware. To maintain an equal respect for the demands of knowledge and feeling is an undertaking which makes the most severe demand upon the mind—for the sufficient reason that although both camps have elaborate notations for controlling their experience, there is none so far existing which can seriously be considered as being applicable to both. The language of those who are concerned with the objective world of forms and structures is that of mathematics and logic; of those who are concerned with the subjective world of being and emotion that of poetry and art. In what sort of tongue should the individual speak who is seeking to synthesize the two?

In so far as we are concerned with those aspects of the world which can legitimately be controlled by the operations of logic, all is well. And in so far as we are concerned with those of its aspects which are most appropriately dealt with by the symbolism of art and religion all is well also. Both the rationalist and the artist who keep strictly to their appointed provinces are aiding us in extending and clarifying our conceptions of the nature of the world.

But when we seek—as we are bound to at some point—to give a really comprehensive account of the subjective-objective structure of experience we become involved in a peculiarly difficult

situation, with the result that our statements are exceptionally liable to be misleading and obscure. For one of the twin elements of which it is constituted is essentially indescribable. When we talk of the things of which the objective world is made up there is a reasonably close correspondence between the conceptions which we employ and the objects to which they refer. In fact there are grounds for believing that they are just as likely to be the constructions of our thought as the subject-matter of our reflections. When, however, we become concerned with the inner life of the soul we can only talk *about* it, making use of terms which have been designed primarily to deal, not with our feelings, but with the objects which serve to awaken them. As a result we are confronted with a very similar problem to that which meets us in the field of map projection, where a curved must be represented on a flat surface; some form of distortion is inevitable. And we invite the sort of difficulty illustrated by the observation of Whitehead that the exponents of the theory of internal relations made the mistake of expressing themselves in the language of external relations.

We shall discover as we proceed that pitfalls of this type meet us at every step on the path. And we cannot but feel that in this matter we are struggling with problems of a transitional order which can present themselves only at an epoch in which we are disengaging ourselves from conceptions of a materialistic and fundamentally unsatisfactory type and entering into a new and more organic mode of realization which will in time evolve its own appropriate, economic and intelligible nomenclature.

In view of these considerations it will be apparent why I have made no attempt to use exact philosophical language in developing the present thesis. It is possible, by exercising extreme care, to present one's ideas in such a way that a reasonable amount of formal clarity is achieved. Naturally no thinker, however painstaking and resourceful he may be, can frame his statements in such a way that certain subtle, and generally perverse, minds will not find them tainted with ambiguity. But one can, with great pains, measure up to that standard of exactness which is demanded by the trained philosopher.

Such accuracy is secured, however, only by resorting to definitions, qualifications and other nervous dialectical precautions on such a scale that there is lost in the process something which from the point of view of imaginative presentation is of far greater importance—spontaneity, economy and, above all, a direct appeal to the intuitions of the reader. Hence in what follows I shall express myself deliberately in what will probably appear to the fastidious intellectualist as deplorably loose terms—for the sake of gaining the ear (I hope) of another kind of person whose endowment lies in the fact that he is sensitive to the life and processes of the soul.

(As it happens, this last word perfectly illustrates my standpoint: I simply do not pause to dispute with the type of thinker who wants to know what I "mean" by using such an "unscientific" term. All I can say is that it has its place in a universe of discourse which is as valid as his own, and leave it at that.)

What it comes to is this. In order to give expression to more interior and mystical realizations one finds oneself obliged to employ terms which inevitably appear to the critical observer who is contemplating them from the outside as being loose, vague, sentimental or confused. When, however, these same terms are considered from *within* the experience which they are designed to express they assume a widely different character. For to the degree that they are lit up, as it were, by the intensity of the individual's inner life they become charged with meaning and virtue. And this is sufficiently indicated by the fact that those who have been awakened to this particular aspect of reality are able to use them for the purposes of mutual communication with freedom and effect.

In other words, if individuals are emotionally in rapport in this realm they can employ such conceptions with impunity—just because their intellectual meaning is of subordinate significance. If, on the contrary, they are treated simply as ideological counters and analysed with cold philosophical detachment they will prove to be ambiguous, contradictory and obscure. We find ourselves in a field of experience in which the head can achieve nothing without the collaboration of the emotional and inspirational nature.

My aim in this particular essay is to bring out as far as I can the reality of certain elements in experience which, while they evade the rationalizing mind, can just as certainly be apprehended by the exercise of intuition and poetic imagination. In this matter, in fact, I am glad to place myself in the tradition of Coleridge, who in *The Friend* appealed to his readers with the memorable words:

I have said, that my very system compels me to make every fair appeal to the feelings, the imagination, and even the fancy. If these are to be held from the service of truth, virtue and happiness, to what purpose were they given?

On the other hand it is essential to emphasize the fact that any statement about life which is made in the philosophical mode, even if it relates to the realm of the poetic, will tend, owing to the continual effort involved to maintain moderation and balance, to be somewhat dull and low-pitched in character. And this (although the opposite might perhaps be expected) is particularly the case in relation to the sphere of thought with which we are concerned in these pages. For it is a question of synthesizing, not simply a number of purely intellectual positions, but a range of

attitudes and responses to experience many of which are of an aesthetic and mystical order, and which therefore have as a result a fascinating and often positively dangerous quality which makes it all the more necessary to be on one's guard against them.

And to render the picture even more deceptive, the apparent vitality of many of these interpretations is greatly enhanced through the fact that their exponents are pouring into one limited aspect of truth, which alone appears to them to be satisfying or real, all the energy and passion which more philosophical minds would distribute over a wider field. Prejudice and limitation thus acquire an intensive and magnetic power in relation to which comprehensiveness and sobriety appear as a tame and unexciting sort of achievement.

Yet such dispassion really involves a severe struggle against resisting the seduction of all manner of partial and one-sided attitudes, a stern renunciation of the luxury of letting one's self go in pursuit of this or that alluring but deceptive idea. The consequences are very much less startling than those of simplification and fanatic localization, and certainly make less entertaining reading. But, after all, no intelligent person would expect philosophy (unless it is an instrument in the hands of genius) to perform any other service. And this service is in any case one which can be properly appreciated only in the later stages of one's life, when the major concern of the mind is no longer that of becoming absorbed in fascinating individual aspects of truth, but that of grasping the total structure of experience, of arriving at some idea of the general scheme of things.

However, the situation is somewhat relieved for us through the fact that our concern in these pages is not with rationalistic philosophy but with its interior orientation through respect for realizations of a more mystical order. And here we find that we can distinguish four outstanding ways of approaching the subject.

In the first place we have the enunciation by analytical psychologists of the principles which they believe to determine the character of our psychic life. The result is a peculiar type of thinking in which mythology, symbolism and art are associated with the terminology of science in a desperate attempt to interpret a realm of experience to which neither poetry nor logic alone can do adequate justice. The bizarre, and often phantastic, productions of this school, which can be classified neither as science nor philosophy, but which yet often throw great light on the subjective aspect of the universe, will be discussed in a later chapter.¹

We then have the productions of what may be described as the romantic school: the attempts of writers whose attitude to life is fundamentally poetic to express their realizations in more or less

¹ See Chapter V.

formal terms. Such works as D. H. Lawrence's *Fantasia of the Unconscious* will occur to the reader as examples. What they usually result in is an unsatisfactory compromise between literature and philosophy, irritating to representatives of both camps, and relieved only by pregnant thoughts and deep intuitions which, however, but rarely justify the confusion which is created in the course of bringing them forth. All we can say is that we are undoubtedly conducted into a certain field of experience of an important type which, however, is rarely made properly intelligible to us.

And when we place ourselves in the hands of the more classical type of thinker we merely expose ourselves to an opposite extreme. For either he has not really penetrated to the subjective depths of the experience or, if he has to some degree succeeded in doing so, he is likely to be limited by the traditional conceptions in which he is accustomed to think. For the key to orientation in this realm is before everything that "wisdom of the heart" which for the intellectualist is always mysterious and baffling. Of which more later.

Finally, we have to consider the contribution which is made in this field by religion. It is the business of the religious philosopher to take account, not only of the principles of science and humanism, but of a deeper realm of inwardness to which spiritual awareness alone provides the key. We should therefore normally expect him to furnish us with a complete and balanced picture of that subjective-objective universe into which we are seeking to penetrate.

But we are disappointed. As will appear later,¹ we have to face the fact that the typical representatives of the Churches today can scarcely claim to be religious thinkers in any deep sense of the term. They are essentially *humanists* who formally accommodate their ideas within some sort of theological system. And even if by some miracle they became animated by a more interior inspiration it would still remain true that the problem cannot be worked out today in traditional terms. It must be allowed that classical religion did undoubtedly provide men with a means of overcoming the world. There is no question of our ever getting any deeper than have the great ones amongst those who have preceded us along the road. But it is no less true also that we must today find our way out of the maze in our own distinctive fashion. We are living in the present. And this means that we can solve our problems only in terms of those formulations, emphases and differentiations which belong specifically to the epoch by which we are conditioned. Life and meaning can come to us today only as a result of working out the implications of certain insights and impulses, the emergence and urgency of which makes our age

¹ See II, ii, 9.

spiritually just what it is. And these new tendencies have arisen almost entirely outside the realm of traditional religious thought. True, they are largely "secular" in character; there is nothing at the first glance particularly "religious" about, for instance, non-Aristotelian logic. But one must nevertheless affirm that our return to religion—which is already manifestly in progress—can be accomplished solely by exploring and developing these new attitudes to experience.

We may, it is true, be brought back as a result to the same fundamental realizations as those which lie at the basis of Augustine's *Confessions* or the *Imitation*. But the point is that we are impelled to work out the problem in our own way by bringing to bear upon it our characteristically modern realizations. We are living in the Age of the Concrete. And this means that those truths which in an earlier epoch men grasped intuitively or established in terms of rational principles must today be mastered by us in terms of inductive knowledge. Our ideal is to bring to bear upon every problem the widest possible range of properly established facts, to work it out in detail in the light of the findings of psychology, sociology and transcendentalism and everything else that appears to be relevant to its solution, to exhibit it as an element in a comprehensive system. Only then do we feel that we have any real control over the situation.

As I have already insisted above, in attempting to realize this ideal we have so far, under the influence of a triumphant science, occupied ourselves to an undue degree with the more measurable and tangible factors in the equation; the compensating insights have yet to be attained. But the principle remains that we are in any case committed to dealing with knowledge in the objective mode, to realizing the full implications of every situation with which we are presented with full regard to the range and character of our modern knowledge.

CHAPTER TWO

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF RATIONALISM

IN the course of the last chapter I gave a very general indication of the problem with which we are today presented through the domination of our minds by rationalistic thought. Its character must now be more exactly defined.

I. *The Meaning of Phenomenalism*

The essence of the situation is that we have to oppose in the most resolute fashion any attempt, in whatever field of knowledge, to deal with the outside except in conjunction with the inside of life. Our experience of the finite must be recognized as being really experience of the Infinite in a limited form. If, in seeking to come to terms with existence we have a due awareness of the fact that we are actually concerned with a far wider situation than we appear to be; if in our thinking we keep ourselves open all the time to an influx of power from the Beyond which will preserve us from being conditioned by the set of conceptions which we are employing; if, in contemplating the visible, we hold it, as it were, within the sphere of a greater Invisible to which we are no less certainly related inwardly, and in which alone its meaning and significance reside—then we shall not only retain our spiritual freedom, but also act and think with true discrimination and effect.

If, on the contrary, we commit the error of detaching the outer object from its inner affiliations, and—what is no less serious—detaching the faculties by which we control it from those more interior faculties with which we relate ourselves to the deeper subjective realm—then we fall into illusion.

In eastern thought this condition is known as *maya*, the appearance which results from contemplating the universe as if it existed in independence of Brahma, its Supreme Source. In western terminology we describe it as idolatry or phenomenalism, or concern with appearances apart from the Reality which lies behind them. In this study I use the term "phenomenalism" in particular, for the reason that it designates an attitude to experience which comprehends all that is usually meant by "materialism", "empiricism" and "positivism", and because also it is more appropriate to the standpoint from which I am here treating the whole problem of consciousness.

What it comes to is that the intellect when it is active in dissociation from the deeper processes of the spirit is betrayed at every point into abstracting manifestations from those to which they are organically related, and in particular from those which lie behind them on a more interior level of existence. In other words, the surface of our consciousness registers, manipulates and organizes for its own limited purposes the surface of life—just as at a more profound depth the inner consciousness responds to its inwardness. It therefore works out that every attempt to come into association with reality resolves itself subjectively into a struggle to pierce down to that point within one's own being from which true and discerning vision is possible, and objectively into

the destructive analysis of all those false outer systems, conventions and accepted interpretations of life which have been brought into existence by the operations of the rationalizing intellect working in the service of separateness and egoism.

But this desperate and iconoclastic activity is only the first phase of our emancipation; it is but the prelude to a gradually extending and ever more distinct vision of the wonderful forms of life as they exist unperverted by our arbitrary evaluations and systematizations. The resistance to such penetration is, however, enormous. For every figure, image or conception which thus stands between ourselves and truth is charged to the full with powerful emotional associations, so that the primary struggle is not with the mind, but with the soul, the appetites of which are deeply satisfied by these illusory creations.

The distinctive character of phenomenalism lies in the fact that the surface triumphs over the depths, the tangible and logically tractable over the underlying and ineffable, what is immediately presented to the senses over what is veiled, and divined only by the heart. It is manifested in such things as utilitarianism in all its forms, in the reduction of the organic to the narrowly "scientific" object, in the isolation of the formal in art, in every type of pedantry and legalism, in the abuse of epistemology in philosophy, in the dissociation of superficial psychological states from deeper states which underlie them, in neglect of the great realm of the Beyond, and supremely in the repudiation of the Divine as the ultimate informing principle of all life, whether subjective or objective in character.

As already suggested, the outcome of all these perversities is one form or another of illusion. But the issue is somewhat subtle. We are *not* simply involved with deeper unknown, or incognizable, levels of experience our ignorance of which leaves our immediate knowledge still unaffected and valid on its own plane. If this were so science, for instance, could with impunity advance the suave and specious claim that what it has discovered is sound and true as far as it goes, that we must all wait patiently for further vistas to open up as we advance, and that it is evidently quite unprofitable to "speculate" regarding possibilities that are far beyond our present power of verification—and all the rest of it. But the situation is actually widely different. For we have to reckon with the much more profound principle that the starting point of all true knowledge and creative action is interior realization. And this realization should make for a true association with Reality, both in the subjective and the objective mode. We should normally know both ourselves inwardly and the external world outwardly as manifestations of the indwelling Spirit. Any lesser state is one of limitation and affliction. Agnosticism, although it may involve a dignified and appropriate

recognition of our earthbound human condition, is also a confession of failure, an attitude which is possible only while the higher powers of the soul still remain unawakened.

The point is that once the mind ceases to attune itself *primarily* to the Spirit, all interpretations and constructions become not merely partial, but actually misleading and illusory. If we begin by taking the phenomenal at its face value no increase of our knowledge, however extensive, will ever bring us a step nearer to a vision of the true character of that which we are trying to understand. If, on the contrary, we link ourselves first of all with the Mystery which lies behind it, what we then perceive will be really illuminating. That is why, whereas the uninspired investigator merely multiplies facts, there is always something of the mystic even in the purely scientific genius. His achievement implies an interior transcendence of the world which he is observing.¹

But this association with the Within is by no means exclusively a mental operation. It is effected, rather, by an act of love; the organ involved is primarily not the head but the heart. Hence it follows that the deeper the order of understanding which is sought, the more essential is it to subordinate mere intellectual curiosity to spiritual aspiration and dedication. Only through such an attitude will anything worthy to be called enlightenment be achieved.

The enormous danger created by the secularization of scientific research lies in the fact that it makes for what we must without flinching describe as the exaltation of the lower faculties of the mind at the expense of the higher. In other words, it brings about a fatal dissociation between the realm of physics and that of metaphysics. And it denies the important principle that true illumination is imparted only to the virtuous, who have by appropriate disciplines established an inner association with That which lies beyond the world of appearances.

However strange this doctrine may sound to our western ears, to the thinkers of the East it is an absolute commonplace. They take it for granted that the only guarantee of discrimination and enlightenment is a condition of moral purity.² And obviously the more lofty the order of truth entailed, the greater the need for such

¹ Dr. Graham Howe, whose remarkable pioneer work in the field of spiritual psychology has great significance for the theme which I am here trying to express, writes in the Preface to his *Triumphant Spirit* (1943): "The scientists of tomorrow must be Mystics, Poets, Dreamers too, as well as what they are today, if their work is to stand the test of time." (Italics in original.)

² "In Indian philosophy knowledge and morality are thought inseparable—not simply because morality, or doing of good, depends on the knowledge of what is good, about which all philosophers would agree, but also because perfection of knowledge is regarded as impossible without morality, the voluntary control of passions and prejudices." (Chatterjee and Datta, *An Introduction to Indian Philosophy*, Calcutta, 1939, p. 151.) The severe conditions laid down by Sankara for the study of philosophy are well known. On the other hand we find Father D'Arcy writing (*Thomas Aquinas*, 1930, p. 14): "St. Augustine himself maintained that a holy and pure life were necessary for an appreciation and understanding of truth. This is a salutary maxim but somewhat alarming for the philosopher, and when exaggerated it tends to a denial of the claims of reason."

control. Hence if science proposes to provide us with a radical solution of our individual and social problems it must be prepared, on this philosophy, to take the moral problem very seriously.

It must certainly be admitted, however, that there is every reason why the western man of science should regard the realm of the metaphysical with the utmost suspicion. For it is a familiar enough fact that modern science was born as a result of a fierce struggle to emancipate thought from the shackles of an obscurantist theology. And the natural result is that the scientist is extremely sceptical regarding anything which in any way suggests transcendentalism, mysticism, or transactions with a Beyond, which present themselves to him as the traditional enemies of truth. His one concern is to discover and establish facts which are carefully sterilized from any such reference.

Yet all this does not alter the fact that the situation which has arisen as a result is extremely disturbing for the future of civilization. For the modern investigator is taking the enormous risk of concentrating upon the world of the senses without exercising any of those precautions which traditional wisdom has always insisted that the enterprise demands. As we are all aware, the sound classical doctrine, both eastern and western, is that the world of the senses is *dangerous*. Man has a natural and fatal disposition to incline downwards towards immersion in the Flux. He cannot safely undertake the study of material processes unless in doing so he is careful to provide himself with certain transcendental safeguards, designed to arrest the progress of degradation to which he is natively subject. In simple terms, to the extent that you direct your attention outwards to the world of phenomena you must compensate for the gesture by an equally definite concentration upon that interior world of Spirit by which it is polarized and informed. Matter can be effectively dealt with only from a safe transcendental distance, from the realm of the Eternal. Or to describe the situation in theological terms, only through constant aspiration towards God can you preserve that interior purity and clarity which will enable you to relate yourself with discrimination to His works. The Without can be mastered only from the vantage-point of the Within. If the true light of the Spirit is not kindled in the soul it will be deceived and seduced without limit by the manifestations which it is seeking to understand and control. Science will flourish and wisdom languish.

And it will be apparent that the higher in the scale of being are the objects which are thus wrongly approached, the greater will be the resulting confusion. In the case of the study of man it will be at a maximum.

Today, as already remarked, we have reached the position that our activity in this field has been entirely secularized. This means that practically everyone who is attempting to deal with the problem

of acquiring scientific knowledge contemplates the undertaking almost exclusively in terms of its external aspect. In other words, he disregards almost completely the subjective pole of the equation. Instead of concentrating *equally* upon the object and the self for which it exists, the investigator simplifies the situation by devoting the whole of his attention to that which is presented to him from without. His curiosity—which he is naively inclined to regard as “sacred”—is aroused; he becomes interested in a particular possibility; he is moved to follow up this or that “promising line of enquiry”. And this is enough for him. In other words, he is motivated and determined by the object.

In the first section of the present work I am concerned with the disastrous consequences of this neglect of the factor of inwardness. The influence upon society—and particularly upon a society which has been educated into accepting the “leadership” of science in the most docile and uncritical terms—is too obvious to need stressing. I take it for granted that the reader is alive to the threat which unalloyed scientific thinking brings with it to our contemporary civilization. We are all by now well enough aware of the fact that science places the most dangerous weapons in the hands of a morally undeveloped humanity; that it increases wants and sensations without providing us with the discipline necessary to control them; that by directing our attention too persistently to physical objects and processes it inclines our minds towards materialism and scepticism.

What is more, this unrelieved extraversion undermines the very efficiency of science itself. At the roots it cuts the soul of the investigator off from those deep sources of inward life on which his operations ultimately depend, with the result that, as a consequence of this metaphysical impoverishment, even within that artificially defined sphere within which science has gained control over life the situation remains fundamentally unsatisfactory.

The essence of the matter is that mental activity which is not centred in inwardness is fatal to *wisdom*. It is not by any means prejudicial to the accumulation of technical knowledge in restricted spheres; the process may indeed be perfected. But there results a dangerous inability to co-ordinate the different aspects of experience, to attain to a balanced picture of the whole. Specialization flourishes and philosophy—which at its highest makes for comprehensive understanding—suffers correspondingly. The sense of unity is lost—for it is only by mystical association with the Universal Spirit within that it can be fostered and preserved.

Naturally, the tremendous concentration which has thus been undertaken upon a selected region of experience cannot but make in all sorts of directions for impressive results. But it remains true that a serious price is being paid for the limited terms in which the enterprise is conceived. For if we consider the outcome of all this

intense and prolonged effort we cannot but be struck by the extraordinarily irregular, haphazard and precarious character of the advance of scientific knowledge. The continual reshuffling of hypotheses, the constant shifting of standpoint and emphasis, the lack of co-ordination, the reversion to previously abandoned assumptions, the almost uncontrollable multiplication of information—all these features, combined with the fact that in spite of the remarkable successes which have been achieved the deeper problems still remain obstinately unsolved, point strongly to the conclusion that we are confronted with something more than the inherent difficulty of discovering the working of Nature's processes. God has not played an unkind trick upon us by making everything too difficult! On the contrary the trouble lies fundamentally, not with the subject-matter, but with our undiscerning approach to it. Intelligence is expending its energies in dangerous dissociation from wisdom. Or to put it philosophically, the phenomenal has been detached from the noumenal. The whole undertaking has no proper metaphysical foundations. It is not the application and outworking of a more inward order of realization, but an irresponsible ranging over the whole surface of experience. There is lacking that organic vision, born of the spirit, which would lead men to perceive the basic anatomy of the universe, to identify the really illuminating principles, to economize their efforts, to perceive the more radical factors in the equation.¹

It is a notable fact that practically the only outstanding scientist in the nineteenth century whose physical investigations were based upon a consciously accepted and formulated system of metaphysics was that great personality, Gustav Fechner. Needless to say, his colleagues and successors were interested only in the scientific aspect of his researches. "By an irony of fate," writes Professor Flugel, "the scientific world has cared little or nothing for the motives which inspired Fechner in this work. It adopted his methods and continued his investigations . . . but for the philosophy, which to Fechner was the true end of all his labours in this field,

¹ The disastrous effects of the severance of physical knowledge from any knowledge of a higher order have been powerfully set forth by René Guénon in his *East and West* (1941). In a chapter entitled "The Superstition of Science" he writes as follows: "Metaphysic is the knowledge of the universal principles on which all things necessarily depend, directly or indirectly; in the absence of metaphysic, any other knowledge, of whatever order it may be, is literally lacking in principle, and if by that it gains a little in independence (not as a right, but as a matter of fact), it loses much more in import and depth. That is why western science is, as it were, all on the surface. While scattering its energies among countless fragments of knowledge, and losing its way among the innumerable details of fact, it learns nothing about the true nature of things, which it declares to be inaccessible in order to justify its powerlessness in this respect; thus its interest is much more practical than speculative. If there are sometimes attempts to unify this eminently analytical learning, they are purely artificial and are never based on anything but more or less wild suppositions; and they all collapse one after the other, until it seems that no scientific theory of any general bearing can last more than half a century at most. Besides, the western idea which would make synthesis a sort of result and conclusion of analysis is radically false; the truth is that a synthesis worthy of the name can never be reached by analysis, because one belongs to one order of things and the other to another" (pp. 57-8).

scarcely a single subsequent psychologist has shown the slightest interest or enthusiasm." Time will show to whom the ironic spectacle will finally be presented.

2. *The Mystery of the Tao*

Widely different was the approach to Nature in the early Renaissance, before scientific enquiry had become secularized and reduced to a purely intellectual enterprise. Men then proceeded on the assumption that the mind could be turned outwards with impunity only to the degree that it was also turned inwards towards the great Creator of all. Physics, in a word, represented the phenomenal equivalent of metaphysics. What was not first apprehended within would never be properly known without. All must be perceived and understood as an expression of the Mystery within.

In the face of all the glittering successes which have been achieved on a less radical basis one must adhere firmly to this conception of illumination. There are no short cuts. If truth is to be attained the full price must be paid. However strenuous the efforts which they put forth, and however impressive their purely technical triumphs, men will never penetrate to the hidden keys of life and power until they dedicate to the undertaking, not only their critical intellects, but the innermost powers of their souls. The secularized is inevitably the superficial.

But the really significant problem is not that of attaining to an organic picture of the world of the senses, but that of awakening to the character of the wider Ambient in which it is contained. For such is the paradox that only in the light of the more comprehensive can the lesser truth be properly apprehended. The particular must be contemplated under the mode of the Whole.

And this deeper knowledge is attained to only by raising the consciousness to a different and a more interior level. We have to recognize that to whatever degree science extends its activities upon its own plane it will still draw no nearer to grasping the nature of the spiritual processes which are operative in a yet deeper sphere of being. Nothing can be more delusive than the belief entertained by so many men of science that if they can only accumulate a sufficient number of facts upon the particular level to which their minds are directed they will succeed, by the sheer multiplication of data, in discovering what is at work still further within. On the contrary they will inevitably at a certain point be forced to realize—what to the imaginative is evident from the outset—that each level of existence reveals its secrets only to the thinker who has developed the appropriate faculties for exploring it. And those demanded for penetrating to the hidden springs of life are, one must again insist, essentially spiritual in character.

An examination of the character of that interior sphere of knowledge by which the more external operations of the mind are ensured will be undertaken in the second part of this book. But in view of the fact that the whole argument developed in these pages turns upon admitting the reality of this inner realm of being it will be appropriate, perhaps, for me to explain at this juncture as clearly as I can what I mean when I speak of "the mystical".

The first point to be emphasized is that we have here to do with an element in the universe which, contrary to what might perhaps be expected, lends itself without difficulty to characterization. For it represents an extreme condition—the exact opposite of that material world which we apprehend through the physical body. In other words, it is completely beyond the realm of sensory or intellectual knowledge: reality as experienced in terms of the formless, that which subsists only as in indwelling principle or life. What people refer to when they speak of "mystical" vagueness, formlessness or obscurity, is *not* the mystical, but thoughts and feelings which have been distorted and confused as a result of imperfectly assimilated mystical experience, experience which should properly—as will appear later—serve only to clarify our mental processes.

But although beyond all description or definition the mystical is a reality, and can be experienced just as definitely, though in a different mode, as can external phenomena. And here it is first of all essential to take note of the fact that we can enter this interior sphere in two opposite modes: by that relapse into the undifferentiated which constitutes temporary or permanent idiocy; and by a transcendence of the rational plane as a result of intense effort and discipline. In the first case the after effect is sterility; in the second a higher order of vitalization. It is only the most hostile critic who would fail to distinguish between the two processes.

We have no concern at this point with what are known as "mystical experiences"—to which in any case far too much importance is usually attached. It may be remarked in passing that inward reception of the Light results inevitably, not only in a heightened awareness of the visible world, but also, in one direction or another, in an awakening to the reality of invisible planes of existence and of the discarnate beings who dwell therein. But the critical factor for us at the moment is the possibility of controlling any manifestation with which one is confronted by inner attunement to that Spirit which is both within it and within ourselves. It is a question of attaining to an enduring state of mind, or condition of established inwardness, by which our external consciousness can be sustained. In resisting the centrifugal impulse towards phenomenalism we necessarily move away from the world of the senses, seeking support in the furthest and deepest point which we can

discover within ourselves. And that point, could it be touched, would prove to be purely mystical; the exact centre from which all our impulses primarily radiate, and at which all our impressions are finally synthesized. (Metaphysical reflection impels us to the conclusion that this centre must be the same in all consciousnesses. But this need not at the moment concern us.)

It will be clear that the complement and balancing principle of the external world of rich, intricate and swiftly changing manifestations can only be pure (but infinitely potent) Nothing, absolute rest, the unconditionally static. But—and 'this is the essential point—the static, so far from being functionless, is the animating principle of the dynamic. To the degree that we succeed in focusing our minds upon this deeper condition (the Tao of Chinese philosophy, the Inner Light of the Quakers) there results, not stagnation, but a positive reflex action in the outer consciousness. (There may, of course, be periodic withdrawals into this region for restoration and refreshment, but this is not the essence of the situation.)

The point is quite simply that by an apparent paradox we control the Without by concentrating on the Within, by directing operations from a point which lies the maximum possible psychic distance away from the world of the senses. Externally we find ourselves in relation to a world of objects, internally to that undifferentiated Substance in which they inhere. And it lies in our power to deepen our association with each.

The first process results in what is best described as sophistication, the second in fulness of being. The mystic is simply the person who excels in enlarging his personality in this particular dimension. But the consequences, although recognizable, cannot in the nature of the case be described as easily as can those of extending our objective knowledge. All one can say is that he becomes increasingly sensitive to unity, and that his thoughts and deeds become invested with a quality of depth, beauty and reality which reveals the character of his achievement. And on the external plane it in time becomes evident that his actions conform to a creative, although by no means an obvious, pattern which expresses a true order of spiritual realization. He is attuned to that Centre from which all external processes can be regulated.

This is the creative aspect of the mystical. The character of activities is changed through being accomplished within the sphere of a Presence which, itself intangible and beyond the plane of form, raises that which is undertaken to a higher degree of perfection. Matter is polarized by Spirit. The visible is transformed and elevated by being brought into association with an inner Reality which we can learn to experience just as definitely as the objects of sense.

On the other hand what may be termed the dark aspect of the formless (wrongly described as "mystical" by certain psychologists)

is represented by that strange and primitive realm of being in which consciousness is as it were imprisoned *beneath* the plane of reason, and thus invests objects with a peculiar "magical" quality. This region should perhaps be described as the "elemental".

It follows from all this that to the degree that we extend our phenomenal knowledge it is imperative that for the sake of our spiritual safety we should deepen conjointly our experience of that inner zone of being in which it is, so to speak, immersed. For every movement we make circumferentially along the material rim we should make a corresponding movement inwards towards the noumenal Void at the centre of the cosmic wheel. Those rationalists and men of exact science who cherish the illusion that they can turn their gaze outwards with impunity without a corresponding penetration into the Unmanifested are in their simplicity violating the most ancient principles of spiritual wisdom, and will surely pay an appropriate price for doing so in the end.

We are not concerned at this point with the various techniques available for deepening this essential experience of the Unseen. But one must observe that they do not necessarily involve concentration upon the mystical in its purely formless aspect. Any discipline which makes for knowledge of the spiritual, in so far as it informs and transfigures objects as they are ordinarily known to us, will aid the mind in overcoming the seductions of phenomenalism.

3. *Self and World*

So much for the general character of the problem raised by scientific enquiry. In order to appreciate its implications we must now examine more closely the psychology of the man of science.

The universe is presented to us under the complementary and indis severable aspects of self and world, reconciled for the religious thinker in the being of God. But although we all of us recognize its subjective-objective character, it is psychologically impossible for us to overcome our native bias towards attributing either to one component or the other a greater degree of reality. Constitutionally we are all primarily extraverts or introverts, "tender" or "tough" minded, naturally more at home with the inside or the outside of existence, mystics or men of science by avocation and predilection.

As a consequence mutual understanding between these two camps has always been a matter of the greatest difficulty, and antagonism more frequent than sympathy. If you have been born outside the sphere of the Mystery you will find it almost impossible to come to terms with those who have been born within it; and *vice versa*. You either think in terms of things or of the emotions.

which they arouse within you; of the world, or of the ego for which it exists; only as a result of a long and painful education will your mind and heart be awakened to the significance of the complementary aspect of the universe. And even then you will certainly never succeed in penetrating it completely.

The mark of the objective thinker is that he approaches the problem of knowledge with a profound conviction that the universe is more real than that inner realm of Spirit in which he is participating through his existence as a self-conscious being (if he recognizes its existence at all). And it must be allowed that as a result in one direction at least he develops a number of very impressive qualities. His training makes for humility, a sober scepticism, patience, a high regard for accuracy. And all these excellences evidently derive from the fact that his native inclination is towards surrendering unconditionally to that which is before him. In the last resort it is the universe and not the observing mind which lays down the terms. His basic disposition is that of Thomas Henry Huxley, who was prepared (in his better moments at any rate) to "sit down before facts as a little child". This attitude is, of course, compatible with the greatest possible degree of energy and audacity in experimentation and in the framing of hypotheses. But however pragmatic his attitude, the man of science recognizes that the last word is always with Nature, to the realities of which his theories have to conform if they are to acquire validity. He may have a powerful interior sense of being intellectually creative, but that creativeness is expressed in finding means for discovering the structure of the universe and in taking advantage of it in developing the applications of science. The most that is open to him is to recombine those elements which he already finds in existence.

On the contrary, creativeness in the aesthetic and moral sphere, although it also involves the strictest conformity to an external order, nevertheless places the primary accent, not on the object, but on the self by which it is contemplated. What is eliminated by science becomes fundamental for art and religion. The emphasis is now laid first of all upon the inner self and its freedom. The centre of gravity, so to speak, is in the subjective, and objectivity, although an essential, becomes nevertheless a subordinate, condition of realistic achievement. Obedience is given first and foremost to the Within. The individual is confronted with the problem of expressing his interior sense of life, being and creativeness in terms of fidelity to Nature. But it is before everything on his power to draw fully and freely upon the interior sources of life that the value of his productions basically depends. The scientist may be deemed to have achieved his object when he has torn aside the veil which hides from us the processes of Nature. The corresponding triumph of the artist or the moralist is represented by his success in revealing the deeper

processes of the soul in terms of external realities. And we have to reckon also with the fact that such concern with the realm of personality makes also for a heightened sense of the mystical association between individuals, and hence to a widely different conception of Reality from that to which we are impelled by scientific studies. As will appear later, it impels us inevitably to some form of philosophical spiritualism.

To the artist I shall return in Part Two.¹ Of the man of science it must be said that his inclination is always towards laying undue emphasis upon the material realm, and this remains true even though he may deal with that realm in terms of the most abstract theories. This is an inescapable consequence of his training. For it is psychologically impossible, unless the individual is exceptoinally endowed, to concentrate the mind persistently upon one order of phenomenon without in the process becoming insensitive to others which lie in the periphery of experience. The more familiar becomes insensibly identified with the more real.

As a result of decades of scientific thinking this condition of mind has now become so intensified and established that there has been brought into existence a type of personality whose attitude to experience we now uncritically take for granted as being perfectly normal and natural. Actually, however, such people are just as much the creations of an arbitrary system as, say, the thinkers of the Middle Ages. If, instead of assuming that they represent the products of an emancipated age, we consider them dispassionately, what we find is that they are on the one hand endowed with an extraordinary capacity for objective observation and logical reasoning, and on the other crippled by an almost complete insensitiveness to inspiration, intuition and response to mystical reality. They are really freaks, the whole character of whose outlook is determined by a perilous exaltation of the masculine over the feminine component in consciousness. And, in spite of all the energy which is today expended in extending scientific knowledge, we can be confident that as the influence of Sophia becomes stronger in the world the ascendancy of this attitude will steadily diminish.

Highly significant in this connection is the tremendous emphasis laid by the man of science upon "detachment" and "impersonality". For although these qualities are of supreme value in enabling him to achieve laboratory results, it is no less obvious also that in the negative direction his disposition to extol them at all costs betrays a childish uneasiness regarding that wider region of being which surrounds the small, brightly illuminated spot of light in which he makes his computations. In other words, he is seriously apprehensive regarding all those subjective processes which his training has left him unfitted to understand. So he does all he can to reduce

¹ See Part II, Chapter V.

the undertaking of understanding life to the most elementary—and therefore inadequate—terms.

The whole psychology of scientific "realism", with its pretentious proclamation of "ruthlessness", its almost ritualistic evocation of the cold and impersonal spirit of the laboratory, its deep distrust of anything suggesting emotion, mysticism, or association with the Unseen, its desperate attempts to control every situation by translating it as far as possible to the plane of the sensory and measurable—all this suggests only too strongly that we have to do with a type of thinker who is subconsciously resisting in the most determined fashion any invasion of his clear, masculine, rationalized consciousness from the feminine depths of the Within.

The essence of the matter is that thinkers of this type, in spite of all their apparent sophistication, are still philosophically on the plane of naive realism; they can gain a grip on life only by extending their control over the realm of palpable and measurable phenomena. The world of objective, distinct, logically connected facts is alone fully real to them; while that realm of substance in which they inhere, and with which each and all of us are associated no less directly in a subjective mode, is something on which they have turned their backs in the naive belief that it can be safely ignored.

And this fact is revealed characteristically enough by the attitude of the average scientific worker to the problem of the acquisition of knowledge. If we study the biographies of men of science we cannot but be impressed by the extraordinary indifference which they show to the inner sources of their inspiration. Although they take unending pains in studying the objects before them, they usually have practically no curiosity regarding the creation and development of those inner states on which effective extraversion depends. In the objective realm careful measurement, scrupulous verification, patient experiment and systematization; in the subjective realm the almost complete absence of any discipline or technique, and dependence instead upon visitations, flashes, bright ideas—together with a more or less vague recognition of the fact that a cup of tea, a quiet walk or a rest on the couch will help the flow of "inspiration". And although men of science are beginning to turn their attention to this aspect of the problem, it is significant that they are doing so only after centuries of unanalysed, blindly extraverted, and philosophically naive concern with the outside of the world.

Worthy of attention also is the scientist's attitude to emotion. That he should find it difficult to understand its function in the service of discovering truth is comprehensible enough. For the fact that in the realm of art and religion the accent falls heavily upon the element of *feeling* leads him only too easily to conclude that we are not in this sphere concerned with objective realities but

with "private feelings". Further, since he is accustomed in his own province to pursue researches which depend for their success upon the cultivation of a mood of extreme detachment, he is naturally suspicious of any attempt to introduce feeling into the enterprise of exploring reality. A scientific discovery may awaken intense emotion—but that is another matter. As far as the search for truth is concerned its function must be strictly limited to providing the inward dynamic drive for some rigorously intellectual undertaking, in which indulgence in one's "private feelings" is shockingly out of place.

The thinker of this type finds it extremely difficult to realize that in certain other fields of knowledge the emotions which are a hindrance to him in the laboratory now become the very *condition* of proper apprehension and expression. One might describe the situation by saying that the most significant facts about the universe are those which relate to an intense zone of existence in which the familiar laws governing phenomena no longer apply—just as certain chemical laws break down at very high temperatures, or certain physical laws break down when we pass from the macroscopic to the microscopic. And in order to penetrate this zone we are obliged to develop a corresponding intensity of being. We shall see the truth in this sphere only when our faculties have been exalted and our mental processes modified by a deeper quickening than that demanded for the acquisition of knowledge of a more ordinary and straightforward type.

We come back, in fact, to the conception which we have already encountered earlier: that truth in its depth and amplitude can exist only for the fully awakened personality. In other words, in this wider field, unless there is a release of the emotional nature, the appropriate object *simply does not present itself to the attention*. Only when the interior condition of the observer has been deepened and purified can he penetrate into that zone in which really illuminating knowledge is acquired.

Owing, however, to his misconception of the true function of passion the "impersonal" scientist is led to take an inordinate pride in the type of truth which is arrived at by leaving the deeper reactions of the personality out of account—in that knowledge which exists for us just in so far as all reference to the interior condition of the observer, whether creative or destructive, has been carefully excluded. "Reality" is thus identified with all those facts which are true for nobody in particular at no particular time and place. In a word, the only valid knowledge is that which remains when one of the twin poles of the cosmic equation has been almost completely suppressed. Such is the nemesis for three hundred years of external observation!

But it will be plain that profoundly emotional and "personal"

experience can, no less than the subject-matter of science, be submitted to severe intellectual scrutiny, and from the inside. The dispassion of the artist is something which has very different implications from that of the man of science. But it is none the less a reality. For it implies, not the elimination of feeling, but a capacity to remain detached and impersonal while in a condition of extreme emotional tension. The "unconscious" is released, not as it is released in the case of the neurotic, whose mind may well be flooded with startling but chaotic images, but under the strict control of a critical intelligence. The really creative thinker is capable of standing back and coolly observing phenomena which present themselves only when the consciousness is at a white heat, and exalted, moreover, regarding something more profound than the physical properties of objects. He can be entirely impersonal about the intensely personal, dispassionate regarding the passionate, and treat attachment with uncompromising detachment.

It will be clear that his situation differs from that of the scientist in an important respect. For although there cannot be the slightest doubt that scientific research involves both emotional tension, a high order of intuition, and often a considerable degree of aesthetic sensitiveness, there is a significant difference between the exaltation of our faculties in considering extremely limited abstractions from experience, and a similar exaltation as a condition of dealing with really organic knowledge, in which objects are contemplated of a far more complex type, and in which a much more serious threat is offered to our psychological equilibrium. That is why at different points in this essay I have ventured to suggest that science is relatively an "easy" type of activity, and that on the other hand the greatest tolerance must be shown to emotional and psychic personalities, who are called upon to keep their heads in profoundly disturbing situations which can present themselves only when the spiritual nature has been really aroused.

And now a final word regarding the ethical aspect of the problem. By now it should be abundantly clear that purely scientific discipline *as such* cannot by itself provide an adequate means for spiritualizing the personality. According to his temperament, heredity and education in other fields, a man of science may be serene, violent, humble, arrogant, detached or prejudiced, altruistic or self-seeking, worldly or saintly as the case may be. And there is absolutely no guarantee that the temperance, judiciousness and reason which he displays (and this only up to a point) in his technical capacity will come into play when he becomes concerned with other spheres of thought and action. While whatever his endowment, he will in any case be threatened by a bias towards materialism through the very fact that he is preoccupied with the more external aspects of knowledge. If anyone has any doubts regarding these facts he need only refer to

such studies as *Scientists are Human* (1938) by D. L. Watson, or *Science: Leading and Misleading* (1927) by Arthur Lynch.

In other words, whatever the beneficial effects of a scientific training, they do not extend to producing that basic regeneration and transformation of the personality which is supremely effected by religion. And the corollary is that in respect of all the deeper problems of social and individual life the last word lies, not with the scientific specialist, but with the spiritual philosopher, the expert on values whose business it is to determine the worth and application of the discoveries at which science arrives.¹

As already insisted, physics presupposes metaphysics. Unless we have first established a hold upon the deeper realities we shall never succeed in seeing our merely regional discoveries in a proper perspective. This principle, perfectly understood by the eastern thinker, still demands due recognition in the West, where men are primarily determined more by objective than by subjective reality. Thus in a volume of Indian essays I find the Maharaja of Mysore described as "a ruler of remarkable metaphysical insight and attainments". This assumption that the key to practical achievement lies in transcendental realization is perfectly natural to the oriental mind; whereas we in the West still think it fanciful or irrelevant to demand of our men of action that they should have secured a foothold in such a seemingly remote region of thought.

With respect to the man of science (leaving aside any religious or metaphysical understanding which he may possess naturally) it must be allowed that association with more ultimate reality is provided up to a certain point by the experience which he acquires in his own technical domain.

There is undoubtedly such a thing as the Religion of Science. In studying the processes of nature men cannot but be profoundly impressed by the vastness and intricacy of the Order which discloses itself to their eyes, and be impelled, if they possess any degree of imagination, to attribute it to a Master Intelligence whose designs we can at present grasp only in the most imperfect fashion. And it is clear also that the humility and patience with which the true man of science addresses himself to the study of this enormous complex of interrelated phenomena expresses an essentially religious attitude to experience, even though the individual may consciously be an agnostic. For, no less than the mystic who seeks the Divine within, he is in his own fashion contemplating the Mystery.

In pursuing his researches the man of science is undoubtedly

¹ "In many directions," wrote McDougall in his *Group Mind*, "—by the historians, the biologists, the anthropologists, the statisticians—data are being gathered for a Science of Society whose sure indications will enable us deliberately to guide the further evolution of the nation towards the highest ideal of a nation we can conceive." But the "we" who discover these facts are not to be identified with the "we" who assign them to their proper place in the scheme of things.

seeking to resolve that basic problem of reconciling the within and the without with which we are all struggling. One may say that he is primarily concerned regarding the structure of things in so far as they can be considered as existing in apparent independence of the observer—whereas the artist and the mystic are first of all conscious of the emotions which are awakened within the soul in contemplating them. Both approaches are valid; both involve exact observation and emotional response; but the emphasis is different.

It is tempting, of course, to regard the scientist and the religious thinker as simply being occupied with two complementary aspects of the same reality.¹ But although this view suggests at once a broadly tolerant and humanistic attitude to the problem it cannot really satisfy us. For we have to take account of a profound and ancient tradition according to which the deeper levels of truth are experienced only by retiring within. Of course if you have never really withdrawn from externals you will refuse to accept this hierarchical interpretation of knowledge. But if you have, you will be constrained to acknowledge its necessity. Although, as already remarked, there is undoubtedly a mystical element in the scientific contemplation of nature, it does not take us into the depths of the Mystery. For we are obliged to conclude that it is by the path of feeling that we enter most fully into the sphere of spiritual reality. Only when the emotional nature is deeply stirred do we attain to any real release from our normal condition of earthbound consciousness which, rich and vivid as it may be, is yet, regarded from the more interior and metaphysical standpoint, of the character of a waking dream. Naturally we are aroused in this fashion in any creative sense only when we are moved by some real objective situation. But it lies in the nature of scientific enquiry that, in spite of the extreme alertness and lucidity with which it is conducted, it cannot make for a spiritual release which is equivalent to that resulting from deep religious experience.

The reason is plain. Unless we are concerned with a major discovery, science means for the most part patient routine observation, measurement and experiment, preoccupation with the more mechanical aspects of knowledge, the more highly organized operations of "common sense". This alone keeps the mind of the investigator centred upon the more formal, material and, one must insist, spiritually less revealing, plane of existence. For science by its very nature involves a minimum appeal to introspection—and it is through introspection alone that we can penetrate to the subjective depths of experience.

Significant of this situation is the fact that whereas it is perfectly

¹ Thus Dr. Needham in *The Sceptical Biologist* (1929), p. 64: "It is not much good expecting mystics to appreciate the universe of science, nor to hope for therapeutic effects when religious feeling is injected into the unwilling naturalist. . . . Let each pursue his course in peace."

possible to become a scientific expert without the nature thereby being regenerated in any deep sense, any experience in which we are brought into subjective relation with the great invisible realities which lie beneath the realm of appearances transforms the nature in a far more radical fashion than can any purely scientific concern, however serious, with objective facts.

Of course the pursuit of scientific enquiry may *incidentally* serve to develop valuable, and even heroic, qualities, and it may also prepare the mind for the reception of a higher order of illumination. But we have to consider whether scientific experience *as such* can really initiate the soul into reality. And here we can only fall back upon the classic doctrine that "salvation" is a matter, not of enriching the consciousness on the horizontal plane, but of subjecting the very centre and core of the personality to a mystical process of transmutation which can be effected only by entirely different processes from those entailed in scientific investigation. What is primarily involved is the "heart", and it is almost irrelevant in this connection whether the associated experience of external reality is of the most extensive or the most restricted order. The nature is "changed", whatever the field in which it finds expression.

CHAPTER THREE

SCIENCE AND TRUTH

WE have now examined sufficiently the psychology of the man of science. The next few chapters will be devoted to considering the manner in which it determines his treatment of the problems with which he is confronted in his technical researches.

1. *The Realm of the Organic*

I begin with a purely philosophical question: that of the status of scientific knowledge. It will, I think, become evident as we proceed that as a result of his particular type of interest the scientific investigator is liable to lose sight of the limited character of the truths which it is his concern to establish. Admittedly, as a result of the powerful criticisms advanced by philosophers in the course of the present century, science is adopting a much more humble attitude in these matters than it did in the palmy days of Victorian dogmatism; but there still remain a good many prejudices in this field which it may be worth our while to examine.

Here I must call attention to certain considerations, which although elementary, are nevertheless frequently ignored. First of all, we must note that scientific research is conducted within the framework of a general philosophical situation over which it has no direct control. Thus, it presupposes the freedom of the investigator to select what facts he chooses for attention (with awkward consequences for a scientific theory of behaviourism). It implies a purely intuitive recognition that the links in its chain of reasoning are connected. It involves an act of pure faith that the physical universe exists and that the objects which it handles are actually those which are contemplated by its theories; although science may lay down that if A, then B, the identification of both is an operation which takes us outside the sphere of science as such. And finally, by the very nature of its interest science is concerned with an artificially created closed system controlled by cyclic definitions, and relating only to effects, outworkings and end processes deriving from realities with which it can never directly deal.

As to its method of procedure, it consists essentially in the application of rational principles to the study of nature. It is true enough that the first stage of all scientific enquiry is observation and description. But these are the presuppositions also of every other form of disciplined thought, whether in the realm of action, scholarship, art or religion.¹ What gives science its particular character is not its resort to this technique, nor even its employment of a type of controlled experimentation which is largely denied to other seekers after truth, but its concentration upon those elements in our physical experience which can be dealt with in terms of uniform behaviour.

Science proceeds by creating and manipulating certain narrow abstractions from the totality of our experience. Out of the rich complex of our organic knowledge it selects ruthlessly just what it needs for its particular technique, ignoring what remains behind. In the fields of chemistry and physics, at least, its concern is with the bare and stripped skeleton of the world, that framework on which everything else is hung. And to whatever department of scientific thought we turn, we find ourselves engaged with an extremely limited aspect of the universe—with objects considered only in so far as they are related to one another in terms of logical structure, sequence, causality. The data are obviously simplified to an enormous degree.

What it comes to is that the method of science consists in applying the general principles of rationalism to a particular and limited field—that field in which they “work” most conspicuously and effectively. And it succeeds just in so far as it can restrict its attention

¹ This has been well brought out by Dr. C. E. Raven in his *Science, Religion and the Future* (1943), pp. 85–91.

to the invariable, to that realm which is furthest removed from the sphere of individuality, spontaneity, personality and uniqueness. The greatest triumphs of science are therefore achieved in the fields of the exact sciences where the maximum return is derived from standardizing our experience. For we evidently do less violence to a metal in thinking of it in terms of interchangeable units of uniform behaviour than we do to a butterfly, and *a fortiori* to a human being, by treating them in the same fashion. In other words, reason enjoys its fullest freedom when it is controlling objects which are purely passive to its discipline, which appear simply as instances of general laws, or exemplifications of abstract principles. The smallest mutinous expression of individuality, the least tendency to answer back, and the symmetry of the whole structure is destroyed.

Now we are all well enough aware that in spite of the limitations of this method it can be applied with the most brilliant results. This we witness today on all sides. But it is also clear that we are concerned with a unique abstraction from experience, and we must not therefore exaggerate the importance of the revelation of truth with which it provides us.

First and foremost we must distinguish carefully between the significance of wholes and of their components. Although this is an elementary enough precaution, it may be worth while considering just what it implies.

It is a commonplace that in all our attempts to understand existence we are impelled to take our departure from the totality of our experience. What we find when we look outside ourselves is a complex of phenomena presented to us in an organic relation—colour, form, movement, sound, odour and taste all bound together through the mode of our cognizing—the raw stuff of life, in fact. There is no question, of course, of this welter of impressions providing us with any significant disclosure of reality. The point is simply that it is only by accepting at the outset this rich and complicated material—the undigested experience of the man in the street—that we can hope to penetrate to truth.

Here we note first of all that the modern physicist has reached the point of realizing that he cannot claim that his formulae provide us with a picture of 'reality'; it is a question rather of manipulating a system of symbols which are convenient for his purposes, and which prove to "work", in the sense that by using them he can make accurate prophecies and produce tangible results. Nevertheless—and this is the important consideration—he certainly *does* believe that, whatever the directly unknown and mysterious physical entities to which his calculations refer, such entities do represent the invisible foundation of our sensory experience. In simple terms, it is the activity of the electrons which occasions, *via* our physical

nerves, our subjective experience of, say, a rose. The ultimate basis of imagery is constituted by material processes.

Now the difficulty is that this view, which is consistent enough with the general principles of science, tempts us only too easily to the conclusion that the more finely we dissect objects the nearer we come to discovering what they "really are". What—to recall a well-known passage of Eddington—appears to the superficial eye to be a solid floor is "actually" a swarm of atoms in violent agitation. So that we realize once again that our senses have deceived us. (Not that Eddington himself is to be charged with drawing this inference; but it is certainly one that it is invited by scientific enquiry.)

Clearly, however, this conclusion is extremely hazardous. For it involves us with that fallacy which is technically described as "elementarism"—the unjustified assumption that by reducing a complex to its ultimate components we arrive at a better understanding of its nature than we do by contemplating it as a whole. Whereas the truth is surely that it is synthesis, and not analysis, which provides us with the most important revelation regarding the meaning of life. Or to put it another way, one must affirm that in transferring our attention from the realm of "primary" to "secondary" qualities we are moving, not away from, but *into*, the realm of reality.¹

We have to conclude, therefore, that the scientists, in spite of the command which they have secured over a certain region of being, have paid an important price for not keeping the object at its right distance. By the "right distance" I mean the proper focus, the natural human perspective, the range at which it reveals its most significant character to man. Are not the manifold constituents of the universe so designed that they should be looked at from certain angles and at a certain remove? Are not the most profound revelations about reality those which have been made by the artists, prophets and mystics, all of whom, in a very significant sense of the term, accept the world at its face value? The atomic foundations of existence may indeed represent a very interesting aspect of experience. But what most deeply concerns us is not the skeleton, but the flesh with which it is clothed. The physicist and the chemist are very literally engaged in peeping behind the scenes—and although it is necessary that we should know as much as possible of the stage management, it is nevertheless true that it is not in this sphere that the meaning of the play is to be sought.

¹ It is to be observed, however, that this principle does not apply to the reduction of experience to such ultimate units as are involved, for instance, in the number-system of Pythagoras. The basic principles with which we are here concerned are metaphysical in nature and of an entirely different order from those arrived at by physical investigation, being more of the order of Platonic Ideas, which have latent within them all the possibilities of phenomenal appearance in a sense in which bare "scientific objects" have not. But these considerations will be appreciated only by those who have firmly grasped the distinction between physical and transcendental reality.

Let us give due weight to the fact that we are so constituted that we have no direct transactions with the ultimate constituents of matter. What we are related to by the normal operation of our faculties is the surface of things, the final outcome of successive stages of elaboration, beginning with the electron and ending with the skin. The game of life is played with full-size counters, on the plane of the macroscopic. The most profound messages for us are those that are written large on the palpable exterior of objects. For obviously the last thing to say about the surface is that it is superficial! On the contrary, it is only the final and most outward phase of the chemical-biological process which discloses to us the real, and in terms of which we work out our deeper destiny.

We are thrown back in this matter upon our native sense of reality. We may indeed perceive clearly enough that the *basis* of our existence is provided by physical and chemical processes. But this does not mean that—as the Victorian scientists sought to persuade us—all that lies above this level is merely derivative and epiphenomenal. On the contrary, we have to regard scientific truth as a cross-section of reality made for certain technical purposes, and one which does not diminish the importance of the organic realm. And we are perfectly justified in evaluating that realm directly from the point of view of the psychological elements which are involved in experiencing it. We have only to reflect, for instance, on the weighty fact that it is in this field alone that our powers of emotion, cognition and conation are brought fully into concerted action, to perceive that it provides us with the most important field of experience accessible to us. It is in the sphere of the organic exclusively that we meet with the facts on which we base our moral decisions, which reveals to us the aesthetic, and in which we make contact with the personalities whom we love. And this should surely be enough for us.

The kind of accuracy which is introduced into knowledge by science is in many respects of far less spiritual significance than the more simple, but perfectly precise, correlations which are arrived at by more elementary means. It is solely for certain limited technical purposes that we need to resort to exact measurement. In respect to some of the deepest experiences in our lives we have only to meditate upon such primary facts as the grand succession of the seasons, sunrise and sunset as they are presented naturally to our senses, the primary symbology of right and left, before and after, above and below, the most elementary arrangements of numbers, or such situations as are provided by a closed door, a cross-roads or a ford, to perceive that we are involved with meanings which are more profound than any which result from subjecting phenomena to precise control. There is an important sense in which the exact

length of a sword may have less significance for one than the fact that it is pointed at one's heart.

If, then, we wish to arrive at a really interior order of truth we must be prepared to penetrate the world of common sense in some other dimension than that which interests the man of science. And there is evidently only one direction in which we can do this—in that of the spiritual. Besides seeking to pierce to the physical origin of the objects before us, we must pass through them also at a different angle into the realm of ideas, essences and archetypes; consider them from the standpoint of their aesthetic and religious meaning for us. And this commits us, interestingly enough, to turning our attention not upon, but away from, the world of appearances. For we now have to proceed not by analysing the *object*, but by analysing *ourselves* as its complement. In other words, by sinking into our own depths we attain to an inner liberation as a result of which we are able to see the things around us in their transcendental aspect, not simply as material phenomena, but as revelations of the same indwelling Spirit by the activity of which we are enabled to perceive them—the kind of approach which is typified by Schiller's definition of beauty as "freedom in phenomenal appearance", or by any interpretation of experience in terms of its significance for the ethical will. In a word, instead of learning to see more deeply *into* matter, we have to see *through* it into the transcendental life by which it is informed.¹

2. Primary and Secondary

But it is not to be expected that the man of science—not to speak of the masses of people today whose outlook has been coloured by the scientific approach to truth—should be equally open to these deeper aspects of knowledge. For as a result of his technical training he inevitably comes to regard the world of the objective as being

¹ The following passage from Newman's *Apologia* brings out admirably the character of this mystical penetration of the realm of appearances:

I suppose it was to the Alexandrian school and to the early church that I owe in particular what I definitely held about the angels. . . . I considered them as the real causes of motion, light, and life, and of those elementary principles of the physical universe, which, when offered in their developments to our senses, suggest to us the notion of cause and effect, and of what are called the law of nature. I have drawn out this doctrine in my sermon for Michaelmas day, written not later than 1834. I say of the angels, "Every breath of air and ray of light and heat, every beautiful prospect is, as it were, the skirts of their garments, the waving of the robes of those whose faces see God." Again, I ask what would be the thoughts of a man who, "when examining a flower, or a herb, or a pebble, or a ray of light, which he treats as something so beneath him in the scale of existence, suddenly discovered that he was in the presence of some powerful being who was hidden behind the visible things he was inspecting, who though concealing his wise hand, was giving them their beauty, grace, and perfection, as being God's instrument for the purpose, nay, whose robe and ornaments those objects were, which he was so eager to analyse?" and I therefore remark that "we may say with grateful and simple hearts with the Three Holy Children, 'O all ye works of the Lord, etc., etc., bless ye the Lord, praise Him, and magnify Him for ever.'"

more real than the subjective world within. And this works out quite simply through the fact that the kind of data on which his attention is directed are just those which can be apprehended with a minimum recourse to introspection. Their significance as the outer complement of Spirit is therefore particularly difficult to detect. The objects before the mind present themselves as existing in their own right in seeming independence of the observer, whose task consists in merely registering their existence correctly. In a word, in this particular field the separation of the outside from the inside of reality is at its most extreme. Science represents the triumph of Otherness.

The effect of all this is that first of all the scientist is tempted to draw certain unfounded philosophical conclusions regarding the relation between "public" and merely "private" knowledge. This involves some rather tricky issues which must be considered before we proceed farther.

To begin with, we need not concern ourselves with the well-worn controversy respecting the difference between the "primary" and "secondary" qualities of objects. It will be enough to remark that as the man of science has a legitimate desire to deal with our experiences in as reliable a fashion as possible, he prefers to base his findings whenever he can upon our most dependable perceptions—e.g. to measure "red light", not in terms of subjective redness, but in terms of the objective vibrations per second which correspond thereto. But as we have already seen, by so doing he translates the experience into a sphere in which it is far less rich in meaning for our minds.

But *all* the data with which he deals, even if they refer to so-called "primary" qualities, have an inward "subjective" aspect. For in every case we are concerned with an interior realm of "private" and personal experience which is *referred* by the individual to certain objects outside himself as constituting its cause. The business of science is simply to define those zones within which our more elementary external references can be found to coincide. It organizes and systematizes the irreducible minimum of common experience, and as a result provides us with the most simple and reliable counters for communication with one another. But the space-time system of external relationships which it constructs in the process is no more independent of subjectivity than that coincidence of external references which is achieved in the realm of scholarship and art—only much more easy to deal with.

Hence one cannot but find it somewhat astonishing when an eminent F.R.S. writes as follows:

It is clear . . . that Religion—at any rate, so far as those elements of it which might claim to be universal are concerned

—is made up of individual experiences. It follows that it cannot possibly come into conflict with Science, for Science operates only with common experiences.

The answer can only be that both science and religion are necessarily concerned with "individual experiences"—for the simple reason that there are no other; experience is always individual. The only difference in this case is that those experiences which form the subjective basis of science, since they are more rudimentary in character, can be translated far more easily than can those of religion into terms of common and communicable knowledge.

There is, of course, one obvious sense in which "subjectivity" can imply an exclusion from the world which is "common to all observers". In so far, for instance, as my relation to Westminster Abbey is conditioned in a purely "private" fashion by certain personal associations, what I think and feel about it has no universal significance. This is the "psychological" as opposed to what is known as the "philosophical" subjective. But I can also have other experiences in connection with the Abbey, the basis of which is no less "personal", but which refer objectively to that "public universe" which is presupposed by all sane behaviour, and involve a passage beyond the frontiers of psychological inhibition.

All this is elementary enough. What is less obvious to many is the fact that we cannot limit objectivity to correct perception of the physical attributes of objects. They have also aesthetic and symbolical properties which belong to them in just as intimate a sense. The scientist is tempted to think that whereas, say, the physical characteristics of a mirror are part of the external universe, its beauty exists only "in the beholder". But this position is actually difficult to maintain. For firstly, all the aspects of an object are presented to us in an organic unity; its scientific attributes are abstracted from an experience which is given to us as a whole. And then we have to consider that our deeper feelings about it—if, of course, it is significant enough to arouse them—are awakened always by very definite characteristics which it displays.

There is a necessary and exact correspondence between our interior experience of such elements as goodness, purity, worth and beauty, and an exterior, but by no means obvious, configuration of objects and events. Subjectively I respond to, let us say, peace and nobility; objectively I recognize, if my sensibilities are developed, a particular external pattern in which I find them precisely reflected. In this sense a picture, for example, can be "evil" in the most definite and unmistakable sense. Or again, the objective correlate of "holiness" is a particular arrangement of lines, colours and masses which it is the function of the artist to discern and reproduce. And even when the power of artistic expression is lacking, it remains

true that our emotions, if we are sensitive, are the means by which we register with considerable exactness the character of objective situations which are often beyond our power of analysis. That such situations are interpreted by the artist from a personal angle is of course another matter.

In view of the above considerations any attempt to represent the "universe of science" as the reality regarding which we have merely "private feelings" can scarcely satisfy our minds. We have to reckon with the significance of organic vision which, no less than that of the scientist, involves a relation between the objective and the subjective poles of reality.

3. *Part and Whole*

We must conclude, then, that scientific facts, although important enough for all sorts of purposes, relate only to a restricted realm of truth. It follows that they can provide us with only a very limited basis for drawing conclusions regarding the general nature of the universe.

In examining this problem it will be prudent to establish a clear distinction between the man of science and the philosophizing scientist. The first does not, of course, expose himself to any sort of challenge; his work is simply confined to exploring the constitution of physical nature. The trouble begins only when, on the limited basis of the particular type of datum with which he is concerned, he proceeds to create a system of philosophy which is either materialistic or vitalistic in character—which ignores, in a word, the Eternal. He then naturally calls down upon himself the criticism of philosophers who respect the claims of a wider range of facts. And of course in the opposite direction the situation is the same; the scientist becomes involved in controversies with the theologian only when the latter incautiously invades his domain and makes unjustified assertions—as he did so freely and fatally in earlier centuries—regarding the character of the physical world.

What it comes to, in fact, is that between pure religion and pure science there can be no fundamental conflict. To the enlightened philosopher science will appear as being concerned with the life of the universe in so far as it is manifested through certain systems of material relationships which are disclosed to (or perhaps created by) the mind of man. And he will recognize also that that life is manifested as well through other relationships with which science is incompetent to deal. And that is all.

Actually both scientific and religious thinkers tend to fall short of this comprehensive vision. For the first are constantly in danger of neglecting or misrepresenting aspects of truth with which they are not directly concerned; they just don't play fair. And the second,

although they usually have a wider vision of that total scheme in which both the findings of science and those of theology must be accommodated; in most cases betray a deep resistance to the challenge offered by science to their accepted ideas. Moreover, through their bondage to traditional beliefs they fail to present people with the sort of living, universal and emancipated religion to which the more imaginative type of scientist would be sympathetic. But such a religion is a realizable possibility; and when it gains the ascendancy (as undoubtedly it will) men of science will find in it nothing to move them to criticism.

There will be no need in these pages to review the characteristic systems which were evolved in the course of the last century by thinkers who took their departure from physical and biological theories which proved subsequently to be anything but securely based. As Arnold Lunn has wittily remarked in his *The Flight from Reason*, "it is a great mistake to hitch one's wagon to a shooting star". And one may observe that this caveat applies equally to the attempts of certain scientific thinkers today to pass to the opposite extreme and seek in the discoveries of modern physics a justification for a retreat into subjective idealism. Whatever the aspects of truth which science in the course of its progress may happen to throw into relief, wisdom dictates that before we commit ourselves to philosophizing about them we should take account of the widest possible range of data available and not be dazzled unduly by newly discovered vistas.

One thing is plain. In the nature of the case, science can provide us only with an extremely limited range of facts as a foundation for our cosmic speculations.

Thus the inspection of certain scientific facts may lead Sir James Jeans to the belief that the universe is the creation of a Supreme Mathematician—which is a suggestive enough conclusion. But it is essential to bear in mind that on the basis of other types of experience God may equally appear as the Father, the Supreme Artist, the Ineffable Mystery, the Oversoul, the Giver of Life or the *Deus Absconditus*. In any case it is plain that any evidence regarding the character of the Creator which is derived from the discoveries of science cannot take us very far. For by the mere fact that we are limiting ourselves to scientific truth we are compelled to leave all the most profound and searching problems of the spiritual life unanswered. It may, indeed, lead us to embrace the conception of a Great Architect, but it throws no light whatsoever upon those mysteries of immortality, free will, destiny, evil and redemption which are absolutely fundamental for religion. In fact one may fairly say that the most central and essential of our realizations regarding the deeper nature of man and his relation to God are arrived at in the face of the partial, fragmentary and incompletely co-ordinated

data which are provided for us by the extension of our knowledge of the phenomenal realm. Physics may impress on our minds the significance of order and structure, but it is metaphysics—not as a mere intellectual exercise, but as a living transcendental experience—which alone can furnish us with an adequate basis for a spiritual philosophy in any serious sense of the term.

It may be added that the same principle applies with equal force to the preoccupation of certain technical philosophers with the data of our physical experience. Concerned to discover whether or not man is in touch with "reality", they institute the most subtle and elaborate enquiries into the character of the knowledge which we acquire through our sensory apparatus. And their action in following this course is usually determined to a considerable degree by the principle to which I have already made reference above: the technique of logical analysis can be applied most easily and effectively to the very simplest relationships in our experience. Hence there is a tremendous temptation to concentrate upon them just for the satisfaction of enjoying a command over one's material. Method, in fact, determines aim, and with disastrous results.

Such investigations have their place. But it must surely be apparent that they cannot in the nature of the case be expected to take us very far. For in examining those bare facts of sensory perception with which the philosophers have occupied themselves to such a marked degree we are concerned, after all, with one of the least significant activities of the human spirit. When I consider that familiar old philosophic property, the seemingly solid mahogany dining-table, at which we have all partaken of so many Barmecide intellectual feasts, I narrow down my attention so as to experience it in the most restricted, and one may fairly say the most uninteresting, terms. It becomes for me, in fact, simply one of the infinite number of "things"—any one of which will serve for the purpose in view, whether it be Greta Garbo, the Alps or a collar-stud—which exist for "minds". And by the same token the activity of my own mind becomes limited in the process to the primitive operation of cognizing the bare factual presence of what is before it.

Yet there are philosophers who would have us believe that the laborious researches which are undertaken in working out the implications of this situation are directed to the discovery of the Real! It should surely be apparent, however, that the nature of the Real cannot in the nature of the case be more than very partially disclosed within the field of such elementary data. And this clearly means in the first place that what is ordinarily understood by "philosophy"—almost the whole of the subject-matter of most manuals of the subject—is concerned with only a fraction of the material which must be taken account of by any person who wishes to become a "philosopher" in any serious sense of the term.

Hence the only philosophers really worthy of the name—in the sense that they are not occupied with technical problems, but with principles which are really universal—are such thinkers as those enumerated on an earlier page who had attempted from different points of view, and with varying success, to co-ordinate *all* our experience and not merely that small part of it which lends itself naturally and deceptively to rationalistic treatment. We have not come to grips with the situation until we have taken account of man's soul life in all its extension and profundity—art, love, mysticism, regeneration, grace, sickness and death.

And this is only another way of saying that the data of a comprehensive philosophy must include that of theology which, as properly conceived of, is concerned essentially with the interior powers and processes which are at work beneath those more superficial levels of existence on which the "philosopher" conducts his explorations. Further, it impels us to the conclusion that, as already suggested earlier, the logical systematization of our human experience is a self-contradictory enterprise, since the deeper we penetrate into it, the more imperfectly does our rationalistic technique serve the purposes which we have in view.

Nor is this all. If we had no more serious charge to bring against the scientist-philosopher than that of generalizing upon an inadequate basis the situation would be comparatively straightforward. What we find, however, is that his repudiation of the more spiritual elements in experience usually assumes a much more aggressive form. For he sets out deliberately to discredit them by trying to invest them with an illusory or an epiphenomenal character. Whatever their variations, all purely materialistic and vitalistic interpretations of the universe, whether "dialectic" or otherwise, are distinguished by the fact that they attempt to explain life from below upwards, to evolve the higher out of the lower. They are all therefore antagonistic to that *philosophia perennis* on which classical thinkers have always taken their stand. And they all present us as a result with the most serious intellectual difficulties.

The first point to be considered in evaluating these theories is that the most powerful menace to which they are exposed comes, not from philosophy itself, but from the findings of psychic research. However elaborate the principles which speculative minds may develop in this field, the fact remains that they are being more seriously challenged every year by our steadily extending knowledge of the supersensible world. As a result any philosopher who takes his stand upon materialism finds himself in the notoriously unsatisfactory position of the thinker who is compelled to refute a wide and continually increasing range of possibilities: every instance which appears from any quarter constitutes an additional threat to his thesis. Thus the undisputable persistence of even one in-

dividual after the death of his body (could it be established) would be sufficient to overthrow whole libraries of theories which treat consciousness as a merely biologically based phenomenon which disappears with the disintegration of its physical vehicle.

The perilous character of this situation may be seen from the following remarkably sincere admission made by the late Professor Alexander in his *Space, Time and Deity*:

If convincing experiment should in the future demonstrate the existence of a mind without the body which here subserves it, I shall have to admit that the doctrine of this book would require radical alteration and, as far as I can judge at present, destruction.¹

It would surely be difficult to commit oneself to a more precarious position.

The purely philosophical reply to the materialist is available in manuals which are accessible to all. Here I will only stress the familiar, and to my own mind fundamental, point that it remains almost impossible to understand how matter, which is essentially inert and unconscious, can have evolved blindly to the stage at which it not only brought consciousness into existence but, what is very much more extraordinary, *self-consciousness*. And this incredible process has become even more incredible for us today now that the "matter" which the theory originally assumed—a collection of hard, solid particles whose behaviour was regulated by the "iron laws of nature"—has become etherealized by modern physics into a system of electrical charges the ultimate character of which appears to be remarkably consonant with that of the minds by which it is being contemplated—with the most significant consequences for rationalism.

But much more important than all these considerations is the fact that we are perfectly entitled to approach the whole problem from the other end and to begin, not like the phenomenalist, with the external world, but with that which we discover inside ourselves when we resort to introspection. For our inner consciousness—provided, of course, that it has been properly awakened and disciplined—is just as reliable an agency for providing us with truth in this sphere as is the mind in so far as it is directed outwards; in fact there are weighty reasons for believing that it is much *more* reliable. In any case it is positively unsagacious to expect that any adequate or profound understanding of such ultimate problems as those of Eternity, Immortality, Redemption, Love or Freedom could be safely derived from the inspection of the outer universe alone, as the positivist would have us believe.

¹ Quoted by Edmond Holmes in the *Hibbert Journal*, Vol. XXX, No. 3.

And when we thus take our departure from our subjective experience we find ourselves impelled to the view—and the deeper our interior realizations, the more completely does this apply—that instead of the higher activities of our minds being the product of Nature, it is rather that we live internally in a realm of creativeness and freedom which can find outward expression only in terms of subjection to an objective external realm of strict necessity. And this dualism, according to all philosophers of the more mystical schools, is resolved in an underlying unity, the character of which cannot be grasped by the rational mind.

The more we look into the matter, the more powerfully are we moved to believe that the whole attempt of philosophy in the course of the last few centuries to take its departure from the unreliable and unilluminating bare facts of sense perception has led us into an impasse. The future is surely with some form of (philosophic) spiritualism, which proceeds from the intuition that the basis of our experience is communication through the medium of phenomena between the myriad centres of consciousness which collectively constitute reality. The universe is the form in which personality contemplates its own nature. What we isolate as sensible phenomena are really the external forms of a universally indwelling Life of the reality of which we can, and should, have a direct intuition. Nature is a part of Man! The world of the senses is not simply an illusion, for its forms and processes do correspond in a measure to that which lies behind them (in a sense in which a phantasy does not). But it represents the translation into three-dimensional terms of a deeper spiritual reality which it is also open to us to apprehend in more immediate and satisfying terms. And this, again, involves, as will appear, the important principle that consciousness exists on a series of planes, each of which is valid in its own right and can be legitimately considered in distinction from any of the others with which it is associated.

4. *The Hierarchy of Knowledge*

The survey which has been undertaken in the present chapter can impel us only to one conclusion: that we can find our way safely through the labyrinth of scientific, philosophical, poetic and mystical knowledge which is afforded us by experience only if we have already established in our minds some sort of philosophical classification of the different orders of experience.

For the purpose of the present enquiry I would myself attack the problem along the following lines—though, of course, anything more than a bare sketch of what such a schematization would involve cannot be attempted here. If we wish to reduce the situation to any sort of order we must begin by recognizing the existence of

ifferent levels of awareness, which can be arranged (but only, it to be observed, from the standpoint of the highest of them) in a graded series, extending through the whole range from the mechanical to the mystical. Each of these orders of experience is controlled by an appropriate system of notation, and each is intelligible only to those who have developed a certain order of sensibility.

This is the crux of the whole question. The rationalist who proceeds on the assumption that the nature of reality is disclosed to us only in certain sober and scientific states of mind, and that the deliverances of intuition, mystical insight and poetic imagination cannot claim the same degree of reliability, is beginning his philosophical researches with a powerful and arbitrary assumption which itself demands scrutiny. For a wide review of human experience, both western and (particularly) eastern, compels us to conclude that it is no less realistic to assume that truth is revealed primarily to the "heart", and that until the "heart" has been awakened we cannot understand more than a limited number of its aspects.

One need not therefore apologize for adopting the view that on each successive level of knowledge we are provided with a more interior revelation of reality, and one which in the most exact sense of the term transcends that which is disclosed to us on the level below. In other words the phenomena appropriate to any one plane cannot in the nature of the case be detected on any which is inferior to it—just as the existence of a fourth dimension cannot be perceived by any being with a purely three-dimensional consciousness. Hence the analysis of an object from the point of view of its chemical or physical constitution is simply irrelevant to another undertaken from the point of view of its aesthetic significance; for without changing the mechanical or chemical situation we can so rearrange its parts as to transform it from an ugly into a beautiful phenomenon. Or there comes into play, again, the principle which we have already considered earlier: the meaning and significance possessed by a combination of elements cannot be arrived at by considering them analytically in separation; a whole is more than the mere aggregation of its components.

In the same way in the realm of philosophy we meet with a clear dividing line between those thinkers who are only able to conceive of their problems in terms of the A—Not—A system of Aristotle and those who work them out in terms of antitheses, correlatives, and processes of mutual determination. To the philosopher who has learned to think in this more flexible fashion, the "either-or" approach to knowledge appears as being far too rigid to give us any real command over the more subtle aspects of experience. Regarded from this point of view the endless controversies in the

history of philosophy on such questions as, say, the primacy of intelligence or will can be seen to have arisen as a result of an initially unimaginative approach to the problem; what should properly be sought for is the nature of a deeper reality which necessarily finds expression in the mode of polar opposites.

Then on a still higher level we have to consider the fact that as a result of a mystical quickening we can gain a vision of reality which transcends even this plane of consciousness. That is to say, while acknowledging the reality of that three-dimensional world with which we are presented by our physical senses, and accepting all the modes of thought appropriate to it, we can at the same time become aware of its more interior aspects, perceiving, for instance, that within phenomenal separateness and otherness there lies a deeper realm of existence in which such distinctions are overcome, and in which the relationships between beings are determined more by internal sympathy than by external location. In a word, while the outer structure of the universe is disclosed by the physical senses, its inner structure is discerned by the "heart", which establishes its distinctions in accordance with the mystical processes of love.

Now it will be evident that for anyone who has not yet acquired the freedom of higher dimensions of thought this element of apparent self-completeness will prove to be an obstacle of the most serious type. For on each level we are presented with what can only too easily be interpreted as being a *final* situation. Hence if a person is, for instance, a convinced positivist or a behaviourist, the system of ideas in terms of which he deals with experience will inevitably seem to him to be closed and complete in itself; anyone who advances claims on behalf of a wider order of knowledge will seem to him to be making entirely gratuitous assumptions, indulging in fantasies, and the like. And the situation is essentially the same, of course, with the artist whose mind is closed to the world of the psychic, or the philosopher who fails to grasp the significance of relativism. In a word, we are involved with Whitehead's famous Principle of Misplaced Concreteness.

And here we must also take account of the fact that the transition from one level of consciousness to the next above it is invariably associated with great uncertainty and suffering, and that progress towards enlightenment can be made only by the exercise of a deep faith. Man's peace of mind depends upon his being able to refer his experience to a certain set of assumptions, which are more or less highly intellectually organized. And if they are seriously challenged he is lost. Only with great patience and persistence can he move forward to realizations of a more subtle and interior order, and it is usually a long time before he has them fully under his command. Nor is such transcendence ever primarily achieved by

intellectual exertion alone. For it is the outcome largely of intimate personal experiences which for a long time at least appear to have no direct bearing upon the shaping of the individual's "philosophy".

On the other hand the thinker whose consciousness has been awakened on any one of these levels will have little difficulty in descending the ladder whenever he is called upon to do so. He may not, of course, be able to move about as freely in these other fields as do those for whom they are invested with the character of final reality. But he does at least understand the character of the operations which are being performed on the particular level concerned. Thus a deep mystic might be quite incapable of undertaking practically a piece of scientific research, but he would normally have little difficulty in grasping the general principles which it involves. And in the same way, without being an artist, he would know in what the meaning of art consists. And this for the reason that when we attain to some degree of self-realization we naturally have a wider grasp of truth than do those who are concerned only with its limited facets and aspects. For such comprehension when properly attained to means attunement to that supreme Consciousness which animates all forms (itself a conception which is "nonsense" to the rationalistic thinker). On the other hand a scientist or an artist may excel in his own sphere while remaining incapable of attaining to any true metaphysical understanding.

We have here a situation which leads inevitably to the creation of all manner of disturbing complications. For the thinker whose mind is through nature or habit focused upon a more material order of phenomena is in almost all cases far from being capable of doing justice to those which lie beyond it. The modern physicist who, in the spirit of Whitehead, pays full recognition to the claims of poetry and mysticism is still an exceptional figure. The general tendency of the specialist in externals, on the contrary, is to make every effort, consciously or unconsciously, to translate the problem into terms with which he is familiar, to bring experience down to that level on which it can be denuded of its transcendental significance. This makes in one respect for a sheer disregard of all sorts of data which it is beyond the individual's power to appreciate, and in another for the still more dangerous tendency to reduce them to the same level as those which can be controlled by a more external technique. In this field we meet with all those subtle abuses of categories—such as the conversion of final into efficient causality, the mechanization of the biological, the application of spacial conceptions in regions in which they are inappropriate, and the like—all of which in one way or another have the effect of repudiating the claims of higher values. Or again, we are confronted with the danger that reason, by pressing too hard the analysis of the structure

and the genesis of more exalted states of mind, destroys them in the process.¹

To appreciate the limitations under which modern science is working it is essential to understand the past from which it has emerged. Our modern technique in this field has been elaborated by overcoming, and this in the most resolute and salutary manner, a whole complex of superstitions and prejudices which impeded the developments of free enquiry into the processes of nature.

The accepted view is, of course, that all this involves a pure gain and nothing else. Thus, it is held that in evolving out of alchemy, chemistry was simply disembarassing itself of a lot of rubbish, astronomy came into being by giving a realistic turn to the fantasies of astrology, our modern conception of the structure of matter was gained by transcending the ancient classification of the four elements, and the like. This we find taken for granted in every scientific manual today, and, what is more, accepted quite uncritically even by religious thinkers.

Yet it remains to be seen whether in actual fact the situation is as simple as it is represented as being. I venture to suggest—though I make no attempt to support the view here—that although by reducing the problem to the severely rational terms in which it is at present working, science has gained an astonishing control over certain aspects of truth, it has in the process lost sight of the meaning of many others which cannot in the end be disregarded. For, however bizarre the guise in which they presented their conclusions, the philosophers of the Renaissance, and the ancients before them, had undoubtedly gained an understanding of certain cosmic principles which really determine events. If our modern scientists find them ridiculous or incomprehensible, this is largely because they have not grasped the fact that they were essentially transcendental in character; they were concerned with the more spiritual and inward aspects of the processes of Nature. Hence it is quite useless to approach them as if they represented nothing more than pathetic anticipations of modern knowledge.

The four elements of antique science, for instance, are plainly *not* fire, air, water and earth, in the sense that these are ordinarily understood. Further, this philosophy presupposes a system of relationships which is far more inclusive than those on which modern science has concentrated; the phenomena of chemistry, for instance, were regarded as manifestations in a restricted field of wider processes running through the whole of life. And this, to anyone who approaches such problems from the spiritual point of view, is a perfectly comprehensible notion. Dr. Joseph Needham is shocked to discover that as

¹ See in this connection the criticism of the scientific approach to poetry which has been advanced by Professor Dilz in his *Poetic Pilgrimage* (1942), and by G. Rostrevor Hamilton in *Poetry and Contemplation* (1937).

late as 1700 acids and alkalis were still regarded as being masculine and feminine in character. But the principle, involving as it does an organic conception of life, is very much more fertile than it may appear from the limited standpoint of those thinkers who have reduced Nature to a closed system for the purpose of gaining a certain type of control over her activities. One may suggest, for instance, that the real significance of ancient and mediaeval ideas regarding the operation of correspondences and affinities, or the potency of psychic and magnetic fluids, has yet to be properly understood and appreciated.

The future may yet prove to be with those who, working on the basis of a fundamentally spiritual philosophy, will be able to interpret the rhythms of life in a far deeper and more creative fashion. Presumptuous as the statement may sound, I would affirm that the technique of modern science is too easy—in the sense that it detaches our elementary experience from that wider cosmic experience in which it is comprehended—to justify our having great confidence in its future.

The root of the difficulty is evident enough; it lies in the deep-seated bias of the scientific mind against anything which brings with it a challenge from the wider sphere of the supersensible. The magnificent command established by these thinkers over the realm of the tangible and the measurable has been secured only at the cost of a profound anxiety and uncertainty regarding those deeper levels of being which lie within and behind it. And this insistent impulse to reduce experience at all costs to terms in which it can be controlled by a combination of logical thought and physical observation is the expression, again, of a desire to simplify the great problem of controlling experience, and this by applying to it the easiest possible technique. In fact one must repeat that the whole undertaking reduces itself to an attempt to deal with life without calling upon man's higher faculties in the undertaking, and—what is still more important—submitting to those spiritual disciplines which are demanded in order to perfect them.

The remedy for this unsatisfactory state of affairs will be evident enough: the situation can be clarified only by a careful philosophical investigation directed to determining as exactly as possible the distinctive features of these different orders of knowledge, the notations appropriate to them, the degree and manner in which they can be converted into one another, and the conditions under which they are arrived at. Not, of course, that there is more than a remote prospect of such an undertaking being realized! But it may be as well to hold it before our eyes.

One may remark that such an enquiry would certainly cause a salutary embarrassment to the purely literary adventurers in these fields. For it is becoming increasingly obvious that that pseudo-

philosophical, semi-scientific and quasi-inspirational jargon which has been evolved by philosophizing poets and speculative critics in their efforts to interpret "imaginative" experience seriously needs to be submitted to a rigorous criticism. The time is past when the man of letters who is all but ignorant of the terminology and principles of psychology and philosophy can be trusted to orient himself in this field by the light of his unaided genius. Literature must be prepared to give science its due, and to collaborate with thinkers who approach all these questions in a more technical spirit.¹ Of which more later.

The result of this co-operation would not, however, be simply an unqualified triumph for science. For it is clear that, as I have already indicated above, we are obliged to reckon with all sorts of important aspects of knowledge which cannot be dealt with in terms of a purely rationalistic technique. Once we leave that relatively simple plane of consciousness in which objects are treated in logical and systematic terms, we become involved with numbers of puzzling problems which, one must insist, can be resolved only in the light of a deeper order of illumination.

Thus we meet first of all with the fact that the mode in which universal truth is expressed by the man of science is radically different from that in which it is expressed by the artist and the religious thinker, the process being in the first case extensive, and in the second intensive in character. In other words, for science it is a question of depersonalizing truth, so that facts may be established in purely abstract terms, while for the artist truth is revealed only by being passed through the lens of individual experience, so that history becomes a basic factor in the equation of knowledge. Of which also more later.

Again, it is evident that the system of relationships discerned by the poet and the seer is essentially organic, and can be revealed only by the use of metaphor and analogy. We are concerned with a cross-section of reality made at an entirely different angle from that undertaken by science, and no extension in one dimension has any direct bearing upon extension in the other. And the situation becomes still deeper when we pass beyond poetic imagery into the realm of formal transcendental symbolism.

No less important is the question of the *mode* of cognition in this field. There is here demanded a careful examination of the workings of intuitive understanding, which proceeds by penetrating to essences rather than by logical analyses and which implies the synthetic apprehension of an organic whole.

Finally, I would suggest that to complete this investigation it would be necessary to consolidate the situation on the philosophical

¹ Account must here be taken of that lively piece of criticism, *The Literary Mind: Its Place in an Age of Science* (1932), by Max Eastman.

plane by advancing the claims of those systems of thought which, instead of providing us with a picture of the structure of the objective universe, emphasize the significance of that approach to experience which is made along the path of subjectivity—in other words, philosophies which lay weight upon the meaning and function of feeling and will. But I must postpone the treatment of all these questions until, having finished with negative criticism, we come to consider in Part Two the creative possibilities of personality.

CHAPTER FOUR

SCIENCE AND MAN

OUR concern in the previous chapter was with the relation between subjective and objective experience as it is expressed in the realm of philosophy and physical science. I now turn to the equivalent situation in sociology.

As will appear throughout this book, I do not attach much importance to the difference between technical investigation in this field and the general attitude of educated people towards the world which it tends to foster. The point is, quite simply, that we are all today, whether we are conscious of the fact or not, living in a scientific atmosphere, and that as a result we look at the problems of life in a distinctive fashion, with a marked bias towards accepting one type of evidence rather than another, and with an inclination to regard certain aspects of existence as more real than others. In other words, we are inescapably creatures of our age, products of the tradition in which we have grown up.

But, as I have already suggested earlier, the interesting feature of the situation is that the "age", in the sense in which I am here using the term, is not of long duration, and the tradition only partially and precariously established. The contemporary ascendancy of scientific thought is but a recent phenomenon, and we are already becoming uneasy regarding the benefits which we can expect from it.

I. *Science and Homo Sapiens*

One cannot but be struck by the remarkable degree of insouciance exhibited by human beings in satisfying their curiosity about different aspects of the universe. Certain possibilities attract their

attention; they are followed up with immense energy and zeal—and only after they have become thoroughly entangled in the disturbing complications which result do they awaken to the disconcerting consequences of their original enthusiasm, and ruefully recall the warnings which a few more perspicacious observers had given them at the outset.

A major example of such an eager and unreflective pursuit of a new interest is provided by the extension of scientific investigation to the realm of human behaviour. As a result of the impressive achievements of science in the fields of physics, chemistry, geology and biology, it was inevitable that the same technique should be applied to the study of the investigator himself—man.

Such a departure was bound, however, to present us with problems of the most difficult type. The application to man without serious modification of methods of study originally developed to control the realm of (seemingly) inanimate nature amounts almost to a contradiction in terms. For it is equivalent to dealing with the highest form of life known to us in terms which are ideally applicable to the lowest. Yet the disturbing implications of this departure were characteristically enough never properly faced by the over-confident man of science who, flushed with the triumphs which he had secured in more external and straightforward regions of knowledge, assumed without misgivings or hesitation that it lay in his power to measure man with the same foot-rule which he had employed to measure physical objects.

It is certainly true that the achievements to the credit of science in this field are remarkable. And we may freely allow that it was essential that we should begin our attack on the problems of sociology by controlling the whole domain as far as possible in terms of factual observation, measurement and statistics. But we have evidently reached a point at which such research must be supplemented and conditioned by a concern with those imponderables which in the case of man have such a tremendous significance for the value of our conclusions. In simpler terms, that which the scientific study of man leaves out is destined, one must believe, to assume ever more importance for us.

Here, however, we meet with a serious difficulty. The limitations of the scientist's technique in the sphere of sociology are by no means of an obvious type, and they are registered most decisively just by those people who are *least* able to speak to him in his own language. In other words, the misrepresentation of realities which results from the "scientific" treatment of human experience is most apparent to the poets, the artists and the "sensitives" amongst us, whose evaluations are characteristically made in emotional rather than in intellectual terms. Such people have a strong sense that certain deeper orders of truth are being violated in this particular

field. They *feel* that, in spite of all the more obvious superficial achievements involved, certain things have gone wrong underneath. But they are in most cases incapable of achieving in reply anything more than a more or less inarticulate protest—which of course renders the scientist all the more convinced that the only course open to him is to be still more detached and logical in his researches than he was before.

There are those also who are capable of dealing with the problem in more analytical terms. But it is only rarely that they have the capacity, the energy, and above all the inclination, to examine such problems in any detail. For they are peculiarly subtle in character. It is not simply a matter of showing—as Whitehead has done so admirably in his *Science and the Modern World*—that the data of poetic and religious experience have as much right to our consideration as those of physical science. If it were merely a question of plotting out the different departments of knowledge and insisting on their equal claims upon our attention, the problem would be comparatively easy to master. But the issues are actually far more complicated. For the extension of systematic investigation to man has invited, and brought into existence, certain peculiar falsifications of truth which mislead more than anybody the very people who are responsible for them. Or even if in all sorts of directions valuable contributions are being made to science, it remains true that they are achieved largely at the cost of the neglect of more important types of realization.

Nothing is more fatiguing than the close analysis of subtle perversities. The most healthy and effective response to them is simply to register directly the fact that something is the matter beneath the plausible surface—and pass on. But it is also necessary for certain purposes that even the most intricate knots should be unravelled. So we find that critics appear here and there who address themselves to the formidable task of tracking down the deceptions and misrepresentations of rationalism in this field. But their work is usually vitiated by the fact that they are so distressed or irritated by the situation with which they are confronted that they are unable to preserve that moderation and balance which is demanded for just exposition. He who is really emancipated from an error or a misconception has usually little disposition to expend much energy in exposing it. We are antagonized most readily by that which lies still unresolved within ourselves.

I shall not undertake any such analysis in these pages. I have made a serious effort in this direction in an earlier volume, *The Learned Knife*, which, imperfect as it is, does at least, I think, indicate the typical problems presented in this field and the complications involved in trying to elucidate them. Now, fifteen years later, when they have no longer the same urgency for me which

they possessed at the time, I am both unable and disinclined to follow out such an intricate investigation all over again, and can therefore only offer the reader here a very summary review of the whole question. But I think that I may at least be able to persuade him that this region of thought abounds with difficulties which are by no means appreciated by the majority of students of the subject.

2. *Morality and Truth*

The essence of the problem presented by scientific thinking about man can be very simply stated: the task before us in this realm is so tremendous that we can hope to master it only by calling upon our very highest faculties and powers. And this implies something far more radical than "science" or that superficial liberalism which is its moral equivalent.

This should not impel us, of course, to become cynical regarding the efforts of modern statesmen and reformers to build up a new order after the tremendous catastrophe through which we have passed. Nor is it to deny either that a unique opportunity is now being presented to us in this field. Nevertheless, it is fatal to lose sight of the fact that economic and social planning represent by far the easiest and the most obvious of the activities demanded of us if we seriously wish to establish the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth.

The enormous forces of disruption which have today been let loose in the world, and which will evidently for decades to come threaten the very foundation of our civilization, can be counteracted only by the manifestation of spiritual forces of still greater power. And how are we to draw upon them if we do not deepen our consciousness proportionately? Only as a result of a profound order of personal regeneration shall we attain to the illumination, energy and compassion which are demanded for the tremendous undertaking of creating a new world out of the existing chaos. Unless we are prepared to suffer and struggle on this deeper level we shall never gain any real command over the situation. In other words, the path to peace, illumination and order is through submission to the Mystery, both within and without, with all the purification and dedication which this entails.

What it comes to is that behind economics there lies psychology, and behind psychology again the great world of the Unseen. And the true realist is he who attacks the problem of social transformation with this realization firmly established in his mind. Once again, only through metaphysics can the operations of physics be directed and controlled.

But we have already seen earlier that the average man of science tends to be insensitive to such considerations. We are not surprised therefore when we come to consider the province of sociological

thought to find that he is once again limited by phenomenalism. The distinctive mark of the philosophy of what is known as Scientific Humanism, for instance, is that thinkers who have lost almost all conscious sense of the realities of religion (however true it may be that many of them are moved by obscure mystical impulses) place their faith instead in the power of psychology and education to provide us with the foundations of a new social order. Obviously science has a vast amount of work to do in this realm. Obviously, also, it has remarkable successes to its credit. But the fact remains that once the situation reaches a certain depth, we invariably find ourselves involved with inspirations, intuitions and sources of invisible power which it lies beyond the capacity of men of science as such to understand, invoke or control in any serious sense. In the last resort we are thrown back upon the use of faculties which are developed by an entirely different technique of a purely spiritual order.

The plausibility of scientific humanism lies in the fact that it attributes to a scientific discipline achievements which depend in the last resort upon transcending the plane of science altogether. This means that, as already suggested, in order to gain any sure command over such problems, we must first of all take full account of the bearing upon them of the findings of "psychology". But here we are met with a twofold difficulty. First of all psychology itself is seriously limited in its conclusions by that scientific approach to knowledge on which we have to be on our guard. The psychology which really illuminates these more obscure places is not the psychology of the academic institutions, or even of the clinics, but a deeper psychology the laws of which are revealed only to those who have been quickened by the Spirit. And as we have already seen, the whole aim of scientific humanism is to dispense with this more inward realm of experience.

Secondly, the development of research along these lines very easily causes the man of science to miss the significance of that critically important zone of experience in which the "private" and the psychological becomes transformed into the "public" and the sociological. This is a situation to which the religious thinker has always been acutely sensitive, and although his attitude to the question is familiar enough, it may be worth while recalling it here.

We have to recognize that the vast complex of our all too overpowering objective circumstances is determined from behind the scenes, as it were, by a multiplicity of apparently localized and inconsiderable personal reactions and responses. But the threads which connect these two orders of reality can be traced only by those who possess a somewhat exceptional degree of imagination.

The obvious problems—the inadequate dwellings, the undernourished masses, the diseased children, the idle factories, the dis-

affected minorities—are there challengingly before our eyes, stimulating us rightly enough to institute all manner of reforms. But it requires a certain amount of detachment from this obtrusive and disconcerting scene to picture the infinity of transient and seemingly negligible personal events of which they are the ugly accumulation and precipitation. Unless we have developed a fairly powerful inner life we shall be unable to resist surface orientations and reactions. We shall be more conscious of the broad river than of the numberless tiny streams which have contributed to swelling its volume.

But even supposing that we *have* succeeded in thus changing the focus of our vision we are only at the beginning of our difficulties. For in the first place we are met with the fact that the realm of psychological relationships is very much more subtle and evasive in character than that of the legal, economic, and political considerations which are so effectively controlled by the more objective type of thinker. In fact, as I have already insisted earlier, our characteristically modern disposition to concentrate upon the tangible measurable and more easily manipulated elements in the sociological situation is the expression of a subconscious attempt to deal with it in more easy terms. Rationalism is always seeking to solve the problems of life without bringing our higher faculties into play. It concentrates on the data which exist for us only in our more terrestrial moments and vainly imagines that it can safely leave out of account what the heart alone can discern. And this is not only the basis of the technique of the scientific sociologists; it is the foundation also of an enormous amount of the heroism and devotion of those people whose sympathies are called out most readily by situations of an objective type. But of this more later.

All this does not mean, of course, that we must cease to be interested in external activities and become mystical introvert instead; such a possibility is, in any case, out of the question. But it does mean that we should try to gain a deeper understanding of what may be termed the principle of accumulation: the cumulative effect of myriads of individual actions in creating a massive, large-scale and obvious aggregate which stands out clearly and unmistakably as a "problem", which is then duly identified, characterized, discussed, and generally brought within the range of the minds for which broad and tangible issues alone are real.

There is no need to consider in detail how spiritual regeneration becomes transformed into social effects. The essence of the matter is that it is the intensive that determines the extensive environment. As a result of an infinity of minor responses, decisions and adaptations, a personality is brought into existence. That personality expresses itself every hour of the day in a thousand different ways sometimes only by a glance, a gesture, an inflexion of the voice

sometimes as a presence or a silent influence; sometimes by intense outward activity affecting thousands of men and women. But always the principle holds that the character of the object, the situation, the crisis, can be traced back to the acts of individuals, and behind that to the secret processes at work within their souls. And the supreme realist is he who concentrates upon those processes before everything else in the world.

It is true enough that sociology provides for this situation by undertaking elaborate investigations in the field of applied and practical psychology. And this is healthy and encouraging enough. But, as already remarked, the technique of psychology is itself vitiated, in many serious respects by the influence of scientific thought. Further, what is more important still, we have to consider the crucial fact that concern with social problems, whether in the sphere of psychology or otherwise, appears in all too many cases as a subtle substitute for that still more realistic gesture which consists in reforming oneself.

The whole weight of religious tradition is in favour of the conclusion that the key to a new world is personal regeneration. That regeneration may certainly be accomplished in a measure by work in the field of social welfare. But the fact remains that the deepest release from self results from adaptations which are distinguished just by the fact that they appear to be largely unproductive, and that the individual is sustained by no obvious sense of fulfilment or creative activity. For it is a question of planting seeds which will flower only after a long and subdued incubation—and then only in a mode which provides little satisfaction to the sensational nature.

This is a very different matter from living in the atmosphere of stimulating ideas, discussions, propaganda, controversy and crusading zeal which (together, of course, with a great deal of hard and sober work) invests the activities of those people who are setting out to apply the principles of science to creating a new world. But the individual who is following this more obscure path may be confident that he is building for the future in an absolutely radical fashion, even though it be in a mode which is largely unintelligible to the rationalistic thinker.

3. *Surface and Depths*

So much for psychology. We must now consider the objective aspect of the question: the character of the knowledge which is accumulated by science in this field.

First and foremost, we must face fairly the fact that as far at least as scientific sociology is concerned, the enormous activity which is being developed in this field is carried out in a purely secular spirit. It is certainly true that any concern for the welfare of

humanity has its ultimate roots in the mystical, but the fact remains that if no attempt is made to bring the undertaking into association with the Invisible, and if, moreover, the conscious attitude of these social reformers is one of indifference or hostility to such association, we have to do with what is to all intents and purposes an irreligious philosophy. The assumption of these thinkers is that the intellect, working in almost complete dissociation from the interior mystical nature, is capable of introducing order into the sphere of human relationships. The trust of the investigator is placed before everything in observation and logic, in other words in his normal faculties, unassisted by deeper spiritual adaptations.

Argument regarding such matters is clearly unprofitable. All one can say is that we are confronted with a characteristic modern experiment, the fruits of which have yet to appear. It remains to be seen whether thinkers who have reduced the undertaking to such dangerously simplified terms will finally attain to that insight into reality which is demanded for a radical solution of our problems, and whether, as the years go on, they will be able to compete with others who will unite scientific interest with the cultivation of the deeper spiritual side of the nature, and as a result unfold inspirational, intuitive and even supranormal powers.

In any case it is surely the second of these approaches which is the most appropriate and rewarding in dealing with that unique type of subject-matter represented by human beings. For unless we are crassly materialistic in our outlook we must recognize the fact that we have to do with a manifestation which is essentially and distinctively spiritual—and this can only mean that its deeper nature is revealed to us through the exercise of our higher spiritual faculties.

There will be no need to dwell upon the difficulties presented by human behaviour as the subject-matter of scientific investigation. It will be sufficiently evident that the farther we move from the realm of the (apparently) inanimate, the more irrelevant the use of the rationalistic technique becomes. Science can give us an account of man only in so far as he possesses characteristics which can be treated as if they were those of a lower form of life, in so far, that is to say, as they fall within the domain of the mechanical and the measurable. And we all know perfectly well that the most important attributes of human beings are precisely those which are *not* included in this category. Whereas in the case of a metal or a liquid the "imponderables" involved are for us the least significant elements in the equation, in the case of man it is the exact reverse which is the case. That which makes him distinctively human is just the fact that elements which science can to some degree describe and measure independently are combined into a unity by vital and spiritual processes which cannot be controlled by scientific law.

And the nearer we draw to the central core of the personality, the more completely does this principle apply. Whereas what men do and the physical mechanism which they use in securing their ends can up to a point be systematically described, the indwelling life which thus finds expression can be understood only by an entirely different mode of apprehension. Science may claim the periphery, but it can never penetrate to the centre.

It follows that the most important data regarding human beings can be obtained only by the use of a sympathetic faculty which is demanded only in a far more elementary degree in our transactions with natural objects. Obviously one cannot effectively study even a leaf or a stone without a certain surrender to what is before one. But the important facts about our fellow-men simply do not present themselves at all unless we manifest a high order of imagination, intuition and sympathy. We may then, if we wish to, treat the resulting material in as scientific a fashion as the subject-matter permits. But in the process we shall be obliged to limit ourselves to concern with the least important of the facts before us.

Only by the unfolding of the inner nature can we attain to an understanding of the deeper forces which are at work in men and society. The scientific approach can give us command—important enough in its place and on its own plane—only of those relationships which appear as a result of mystical processes which themselves lie beyond its province.

In all our human situations the more external and tangible factors at work in the equation are preserved in organic harmony by the fact of being included within a sphere or zone of life of an impalpable, yet very definite, character. And the key to this harmony lies in their immersion in this invisible, conditioning medium. But the medium itself evades subordination to the scientific categories. It is spiritual, and can be apprehended only by spiritual organs of perception.

The supreme example is provided, as one would expect, by the human organism itself. The ever-multiplying investigations of science all converge upon the solution of the sovereign problem: the liberation of man's spiritual nature from its present bondage to disruptive forces. For if that mind be destroyed for which the magnificent universe around us exists, all our knowledge of its character automatically disappears.

Hence the control which science is gradually establishing over the more material conditions of life, such as nutrition, health, and protection from the elements, represents only the preliminary phase of a control which must later be extended over another region of far greater spiritual significance. We must become masters of life in its more interior and more potent manifestations. The advance of research into the deeper character of the human organism is

impelling us ever more steadily to the realization that its more material, and therefore more analysable, functions are regulated by others of a more elusive, yet more fundamental, type. The co-ordination of all the processes which can be studied separately and more or less effectively by the analytical minds of the specialists is vested in something which they cannot isolate or describe, but which is yet responsible for the subtle equilibrium of the whole. And that something, baffling as it is to them, is evidently far less of a mystery to *other* minds of a less scientific type for which the immaterial realm of being is an intelligible actuality. The last word is with the mystics, for they are endowed with the faculty of penetrating directly into that sphere of interior substance which controls the phenomena which it is the work of science to describe.

It is only in the light of such considerations that we can explain why orthodox medical science fails so conspicuously in dealing with individuals of a more sensitive and "spiritual" type. The reason is, surely, that the health and general condition of such people is determined by all manner of subtle supranormal influences which the ordinary physician leaves out in his calculations. Hence when they are in difficulties they either cure themselves, are healed by "quacks", or mysteriously recover spontaneously. But for the most part they remain either unresponsive to orthodox medical treatment or are seriously harmed by it.

And when we turn to the social aspect of this problem we find that our dependence upon higher perceptions is no less marked. As we should naturally expect, our deepest and most holy intuitions are connected with the more intimate relations between human beings. As a result it is in the field of psychology and sociology that we find the more materialistic type of scientist violating most seriously our finer impressions regarding the real forces at work in life. Those truths which, although they cannot be proved by the reason, are yet in a very important sense known to the heart are disregarded by thinkers of this type with almost reckless irresponsibility.

In the human realm perhaps the most outstanding example of such vital, yet intangible, factors is that provided by eugenics. The scientific investigator in this field records with great care the measurable physical effects of miscegenation. But however alarmed we may be by his disclosures we are driven back to recognizing that they have little direct bearing upon the actual realities of the situation. For by an irony of fate the "problem of eugenics" is presented to the individual in a concrete form precisely at that highly charged moment when he is the least likely to be impressed by statistical tables and treatises regarding the general situation of the race. What he is thrown back upon are his immediate intuitions regarding the appropriateness of the step which he is contemplating. And here,

if he is in the least sensitive, he will be impelled to conform to spiritual principles which are far too profound to be dealt with by even the enlightened psychologist. For it is just at this point in his life that he becomes responsive most surely and intimately to the Mystery behind all manifestation.

As for the eugenist, it is only when failure in the secret places of the heart has been externalized in the form of gross sociological facts that he can bring his faculties to bear upon the problem. And then it is too late for anything but statistics, which record the outcome of what science itself can never touch.

But even in respect to problems which do not involve such high spiritual considerations we find that the scientist sets to work for the most part in a disturbingly crude fashion. What we only too often discover is that the investigator, conscientious though he may be, ignores, often in the most insensitive spirit, those elements in the complex to which his training has rendered him insensitive. Examples could be multiplied indefinitely. Thus for science the virtue of manures lies solely in the chemical substances which they contain. The simple, easy and obvious course, therefore, is to introduce the appropriate chemicals directly into the soil. . . . And now we are beginning to suspect that Nature's processes are more profound and not to be interfered with by recourse to such facile short cuts. The problem must be solved more organically and more subtle factors taken into account.

Again, for the man of science the virtue of food resides in certain easily identified and purely physical properties which it possesses. First of all the fundamental factor was calories; now the accent is laid instead on vitamins; as the years go on other features will assuredly reveal themselves. Meanwhile from the beginning sensitive people have always felt that far more is involved: there are magnetic and spiritual factors entailed which are of the utmost importance, and which can be accurately registered by those whose faculties are developed in this direction. The spiritual argument for vegetarianism, for instance, rests on the fact that associated with animal blood there are certain psychic substances which have a very serious effect upon man's spiritual body—particularly if the animal has been killed when in a state of fear. And the difficulty is not solved by denying flatly that the realm of psychic being is an illusion. For we have reached a point at which the findings of clairvoyance demand to be taken with due seriousness.

Or consider again the question of the psychic constitution of man. There is a considerable amount of evidence for the existence of the human aura—an envelope of more subtle substance which encloses the physical body and is charged with all manner of electrical and magnetic forces. It has a most important influence upon the individual's health and nervous condition, upon his mental

processes, and upon his contacts with people and things. But by orthodox scientists it is to all extents and purposes ignored; they have no "evidence" for its existence.

And the situation is the same with psychological states, animals, localities, "atmospheres", times and seasons, "personal influences" and a host of other elements in our experience: in the deeper places in our souls we are exposed to an infinitely wider range of impacts than orthodox science can detect, with the result that the picture of reality which it creates on the basis of its limited range of data is extremely misleading and incomplete.

A good example of this neglect of the deeper factors in the equation is provided by modern attempts—proposed in this country, and already put into operation in Russia—to reform the calendar. It is evident that the existing system of dividing up the year is in serious need of revision. This most of us admit. But does any new method of measurement which is purely secular in character really take us far? It may indeed serve all sorts of more external and practical purposes. A lot of trouble would undoubtedly be saved, for instance, by the institution of a fixed Easter. But what if that astronomical juncture is also spiritually significant? We have to enquire whether there are not certain cycles and periods in nature which can be taken advantage of by man, so that his rhythms can be brought into consonance with the more basic rhythms of the cosmos. This opens the door to "dangerous" ideas relating to such disciplines as Astrology. But the fact remains that a system of chronology which pays regard only to mundane human conveniences is essentially superficial. One day, one may hazard, man will learn to respect the more profound order as well as his more practical needs, and the consequences will be remarkable.

And with this we are led straight into the realm of the "occult", with which we shall become engaged at a later point. Here I will only drop the suggestion that if it be really true that all external activities are conditioned from within, we have to consider the possibility that those people who reject disdainfully the reality of the Unseen and who attribute the reform of society to their own unaided efforts are actually, without knowing it, being supported invisibly by the very agencies which they are repudiating. If the assistance provided from behind the Veil was withdrawn their activities would rapidly collapse.

But the most dangerous element in this organization of limited and selected data by the man of science is that his conclusions acquire a peculiarly deceptive character. For, by seizing upon the situation on that external plane on which it can be dealt with in terms of statistics, logic and measurement, he brings into existence a plausible system of surface relationships which have a misleading trick of always appearing to be complete. It lies in the nature of

definition that it produces an illusory impression of finality. The effect is that of one of those sectional bookcases which is always satisfyingly full. Only to the more subtle observer is it apparent that this external consistency and reasonableness have been achieved by a process of unconscious selection and falsification.

In reality the data are seriously defective. For although a great deal of concern is shown by the man of science regarding the more obvious gaps in his knowledge, he betrays little awareness of the fact that he is all the time leaving out of account more intangible elements in the complex which actually far outweigh in significance those which are under his command. It is only as a result of a good deal of reflection that we come to perceive that by presenting as continuous what is really a discontinuous series—by seeing to it that the traffic always passes before our innocent eyes in an unbroken stream—he is really subtly misrepresenting the whole situation. For the reader is compelled all the time to correct the picture by restoring the elements which have been consciously or unconsciously left out of account in bringing it into existence.

Finally, we are faced with the painful outcome of this whole situation. What we find is that as a result of this persistent repudiation of our intuitions regarding the more interior aspects of existence multitudes of people all over the world are exerting tremendous energy, and often displaying the greatest heroism, in wrestling with the confused and difficult conditions which materialism brings into existence. That which is of the Spirit makes always for economy, rhythm, beauty and simplicity, and this in every direction. When, however, the higher perceptions are denied everything immediately becomes laborious, oppressive and unnecessarily complicated. Great achievements may be possible; but they are secured as a result of a failure to come to grips with the problem on a more fundamental level. The "triumphs" of modern medicine are a case in point. They may imply wonderful technical achievements, but they are only called for because people have become insensitive to the operation of finer spiritual influences, response to which could check disease at its roots before it has reached the stage of requiring such drastic, painful and elaborate treatment. And the position is the same with the vast amount of energy which is daily expended in such activities as propaganda, journalism, practical organization, sociological research: if people could be persuaded to deepen their consciousnesses to even a small degree they would discover that the great mass of it is wasteful and superfluous, and that most of the problems with which they spend their time in wrestling would automatically disappear. For they emerge only as a consequence of losing contact with the Within.

All this, it must be insisted, involves something very much more than mere waste of energy. The trouble lies far deeper. For we

find that always when people are engaged in some activity which, because it is not really fundamental, violates all the time their instincts and intuitions, their work becomes distasteful, toilsome or unreal. And instead of facing courageously the fact that their reactions represent in almost all cases a direct and faithful registration of the falsities which lie at the foundation of their activities they sustain themselves instead in their unhappiness and uneasiness by clinging to all manner of assumptions and fixed conventions regarding such things as loyalty, duty, discipline or morality, or even accept the perverse doctrine that work must in any case be expected to be dreary and largely distasteful in character.

A great many of such false conceptions are, it is true, fostered more or less consciously by that small minority in every society who are engaged in exploiting their more credulous associates. And it is indeed heartbreaking to observe the way in which masses of decent and simple folk will sacrifice themselves heroically to a doubtful cause if only their finer sympathies are skilfully appealed to. But such exploitation plays really only a comparatively small part in the creation of this vast and tragic situation. Its roots are to be sought, in the last analysis, in the dark, impenetrable unconsciousness of the mass of humanity, who still remain obstinately unresponsive to those intimations from within the depths of their being which, if they were only respected, would gradually dispel the great collective illusion in which they are all living. Emancipation can come only from a deep and prolonged process of spiritual transmutation, producing in the end the awakening of the suppressed artist and mystic within the soul of each, and leading them as a result to respond, not to the deceptive outer form of things, but to that deeper organic order which it violates and obscures.

4. *The Abuse of Reason*

And now, in conclusion, a few words regarding the intellectual aspect of this complicated problem.

The first effect of an excessive concern with the more measurable aspects of experience is that the mind becomes extraordinarily expert in manipulating abstractions and generalizations. It acquires the faculty of dealing rapidly and easily with masses of facts, and is at home with everything relating to analysis, formulation and co-ordination—while in the process its higher faculties either remain stunted or positively become perverted. The surface triumphs over the depths, the constructions of the masculine intellect dominate the perceptions of the feminine spirit within.

In an almost completely secularized age like the present, when

no serious attempt is made to balance scientific training by specifically spiritual disciplines, the emphasis upon extraversion makes inescapably for a powerful bias in the direction of scepticism and materialism. Rationalism, with all its implications, waxes strong, and inspiration, intuition, seership, and what is best described as soul-knowledge, weaken and languish. And when minds which have been so conditioned turn their attention to such a deeply mysterious being as man the consequences can be disturbing indeed.

How is this attitude to be corrected? Clearly, it is essential that the claims of the inner consciousness—with which we shall be concerned in a later chapter—should be emphasized as resolutely and intelligently as possible. To begin with, on the negative side we must dispel the illusion that reason, when unilluminated by a higher wisdom, is an adequate instrument for the elucidation of serious truth. Attacks upon inspiration and intuition are usually supported by the assumption that when they have failed us we are mercifully provided in our reason with a firm foundation on which we can safely fall back. But this notion will obviously not satisfy. For it is apparent enough that reasoning is a reliable tool only in so far as its operations have not been perverted by unconscious prejudice. And we do not need the analytical psychologists to tell us that the immunity which it can claim in this direction is of a very restricted order. It is true that in so far as science can bring the situation down to the level of pointer readings, ambiguity is excluded and objectivity achieved. But once we become involved with any issues of a more subtle type—in other words with everything that is most important in our experience—logic tends to be at the mercy of sympathy. External reasonableness and what may be termed cultural decency may be solicitously preserved, but beneath this suave and consistent surface the whole picture is twisted out of shape by a thousand different tricks of presentation and emphasis which can be exposed only by the most exact and laborious analysis.

In other words, once we leave the plane of purely physical documentation the only guarantee of truth is provided by the spiritual integrity of those who are imparting and receiving knowledge. And the only difference between those people who consciously rely on their intuitions and those others who support their claims with studied argument and statistical proof is that in the first instance the orientation of thought by sympathy is openly admitted and that in the second, it is disguised by an apparent appeal to objectivity. In both cases the path to truth leads by way of interior clarification, which will result automatically in true insight. Whether such insight is expressed in terms of direct intuition or of unprejudiced reasoning is really a subordinate consideration. The point is that

truth is primarily of the soul and rationalization a purely derivative process.

Then, in the positive direction, it is essential that full weight should be given in this matter to the testimony of the sensitive, feminine and inspirational type of observer, of the person who has a natural eye for the more subtle underlying issues which finally determine the character of events. In an age in which the claims of the scientific, Osirian, consciousness are being pressed to such an inordinate extent at the expense of a finer order of soul knowledge, it is imperative that the more spiritually-minded amongst us should be invited to take courage, and that the validity and importance of their perceptions should be vigorously defended. In other words, the claims of the Isis consciousness should be advanced without misgivings or hesitation, in the firm assurance that the cycle of rationalism in which we have all grown up has now reached its peak and that the voice of the Within is destined to make itself heard among us with ever greater insistence.

And it must be made plain also that the intuitive, prophetic and inspirational faculties of the soul can, no less than the rational, be cultivated and trained. The notion that our finer perceptions are necessarily unreliable and precarious, or even represent only survivals of a more primitive order of consciousness appropriate only to women and children, is one which has been fostered by thinkers of the "tough-minded" type who have no acquaintance from the inside with the states of mind which are involved.

And now, in conclusion, to consider the possibilities which are offered us in the direction of developing a more balanced awareness in relation to the problems of sociology. Here I must content myself with throwing out only a few suggestions: the enquiry cannot, unfortunately, be followed up in these pages. First of all it is important to realize that everything depends upon achieving a *synthesis* of the intuitive and rational elements in our experience. The tendency of the average sociologist is to place the shaping of the social structure in the hands of the experts in planning, and then to invite the artists, seers and mystics to make their respective contributions in the direction of endowing it with beauty and charm. The pattern designed by the rationalizing intelligence is to be given content and depth through the services of minds which are not regarded as being capable of contributing to the design of the edifice. Science, in fact, builds the new world, art decorates it, and religion (if its activity is recognized at all) invokes upon the whole undertaking the benediction of the Eternal.

In much the same way we find certain Christian thinkers today conceiving of life in terms of "two moralities". On the basis of the first we perform our duty, discharge our obligations, and punctiliously exact what is due to us. On the basis of the second, when we

have become definitely religious, we introduce into our behaviour the higher element of "grace", radiating light and goodness super-erogatively out of the fullness of the spiritual within us. And this from the moral standpoint is sound enough. But it does not really take us much farther than the sociological conception referred to above. For the problem is too subtle to be dealt with simply in terms of goodness; we must get beyond the Sunday School. From the standpoint of the more conventional believer, spirituality is typically manifested in a higher *moral*ity. But for the more developed and intense consciousness of the artist and the seer it is manifested, not simply in such things as kindness, patience and service, but in a vision of spiritual forms—in this connection in a vision of the deeper organic structure of society.

And this means not only approval of more obvious reforms relating to such things as housing and factory legislation, but a sensitiveness to the invisible and delicate spiritual anatomy of social life, to those inner creative processes on which everything in the end depends. It means, in fact, introducing the "heart" into the masculine equation, not simply as an agency for "oiling the wheels", but as an agency for selecting and defining the wheels themselves. As against both the scientific and the religious humanists one must insist on the fact that the success of all social schemes depends, in the end, not only on practical intelligence and good will, but upon an unremitting sensitiveness to the feminine component in the equation—with the result that the character of a social order which was really based on such a comprehensive realization would be almost incomprehensible to an intelligence of the strongly masculine type. For, as I have already urged in an earlier chapter, it would be essentially *organic*, involving forms and processes which could be symbolized only by images and figures which to the purely scientific mind would inevitably appear to be obscure or unintelligible. In fact it is not too much to say that we are concerned with a principle which no purely intellectual thinker can ever hope to grasp with any completeness; while on the other hand no true mystic can fail to perceive its significance.

As to the practical implications of this approach to the question I will observe only that if we attack it on these lines we shall find ourselves committed at every point to vindicating personality against abstraction and mechanism. Thus regionalism will affirm its claims against every form of centralization. Crafts will demand recognition to balance mass production. The principle of voluntary action as opposed to any form of external coercion will become of cardinal and positively sacred importance for us. Planning will need to be synthesized with a high measure of what is dangerously and misleadingly described as Anarchism, but more safely and accurately as Self-determination. And finally, for those who have raised the

situation to the metaphysical plane, the final key to the whole problem will be seen to lie in the conception of Theocracy, which implies obedience to the Divine both in the subjective and the objective mode.

CHAPTER FIVE

SCIENCE AND THE SOUL

IN the last chapter I ventured upon the assertion that behind economics there lies psychology, and behind psychology again the mighty influence of the Unseen. It is apparent, therefore, that science in seeking to understand the workings of the human soul is penetrating into a deeper region of experience than that which engages its attention in the realm of sociology. And as a result it becomes involved, as will appear, with even more serious difficulties.

I. *The New Psychology*

In order to see the problem of modern psychology in its proper perspective it is necessary to take account of the place which it occupies in a wider movement of thought.

There can be little doubt that we are today in the early phases of a major ideological and spiritual revolution, the mark of which is that we are awakening to the vast potentialities of the subjective side of our nature. That exploration of the Unconscious which was begun by psychology at the turn of the century is only one aspect of a general tendency which is expressed in other directions in our modern interest in spiritualism and psychic research, hypnotism, the world of the "occult" and the possibilities of "New Thought", and in philosophy by the challenge offered by such thinkers as Bergson to the values of rationalism.

In view of this general shifting of the emphasis towards the feminine end of the spectrum—the world of phantasy, dreams, sympathies, and symbolical and mediumistic experiences—it will be evident that "laboratory psychology", in spite of the body of useful work which is being done in this field, must remain of subordinate importance for us in relation to the deeper problems of life. For such results as it attains are evidently of almost negligible significance in comparison with the enormous possibilities which are opened up by the exploration of the subjective realm.

Just because the material can be handled in a precise and

scientific fashion it reveals itself as being of an external character. It is concerned essentially with man's lesser reactions to life and throws little light on our more profound human problems.¹ In fact it is really desirable that different terms should be used to distinguish a "psychologist" of the type who is concerned, say, with studying pressure sensation from a "psychologist" in the sense that we apply the description to such a writer as Dostoevsky. We do not become concerned with psychology in any really serious sense until we have plunged into the depths of the soul—and paid the appropriate price for doing so.

We have to conclude, therefore, that from the point of view of our modern pilgrimage towards self-realization the only line of research which is worthy of our serious attention is that represented by the New Psychology—Freud and his successors. It is true enough that, as we are now beginning to realize increasingly clearly, the ideas of the early pioneers in this field were conditioned to an extreme degree by the materialistic conceptions prevailing at the end of the last century. But the essential point to be considered is that we have to do with the opening-up of a vast region of *living* experience—experience which relates to our most fundamental and intimate human reactions. However wrong-headed or positively fantastic the theories of the first experimenters in this field, the fact remains that the more enlightened interpretations by which they are being gradually replaced involve no less definitely a break with earlier modes of thought. Whatever happens, there is no longer any question of putting back the clock. We are committed to exploring for a long season the dark, dangerous, mysterious but vastly significant world of the subjective, so that we may at last discover the hidden truths about our own nature.

Nor can we attach much importance either to the fact that—since there is nothing new under the sun—many of these modern conceptions have been arrived at prospectively by earlier thinkers. What is of importance is the stage at which an idea really comes to life. There is a momentous difference between the bare historical anticipation of a conception and the wholesale working-out of its latent possibilities. One is aware, for instance, that Augustine referred in his *Confessions* to the fact that his conscious will was opposed by another within him of a deeper and a stronger order.

¹ In his *Mind and Personality* (1926), Sir William Brown has pointed out that the general principle followed in scientific investigation whereby we proceed from the simple to the more complex is of little value to us in the realm of deeper psychology. For "the mind seems different from other realities of the world in this respect, that the more complex, the later developed forms of mental activity, explain the latter quite as much as being explained by them". And again: "After all we are attempting to explain and to solve the greatest riddle of the universe, the relation of the mind to the brain, of the soul to the body, in terms of concepts that have been of considerable help to us in other branches of science, but may very well be inapplicable to this, the greatest problem of all." Hence, as he remarks, the progressive deterioration of textbooks of psychology as they proceed, chapter by chapter, from the mechanical to the more interior and spiritual aspects of the problem.

But between this germinal realization and its treatment by modern psychologists there is indeed an abyss. For it is now reappearing at a moment when we are capable of developing its potentialities to an extreme degree. We can bring to bear upon it all the resources of modern science in a wide number of fields. Whereas the seeds dropped by thinkers in earlier epochs fell at the time almost entirely on stony ground, we have today initiated in this field an enquiry which is so rich in its possibilities that, in conjunction with similar movements of thought which are impelling us in the same direction, it may well lead us to a radical transformation of our whole notion of psychological reality.

I shall not make any attempt here to examine the extremely complicated theories which have been developed in this province of thought: the work has already been competently performed by others. My concern is simply to bring out what I conceive to be the most essential elements in the momentous situation which they have presented to us. What I have to say is directed principally against the materialistic tendencies which are still so powerfully at work in this field, and which must be resisted with all possible determination. It is true enough that there are now numbers of emancipated psychologists who have progressed far beyond the crude assumptions of the original pioneers who first opened up for us the fantastic and disturbing realm of the unconscious mind. Nearly half a century of reflection and experiment have done much to correct the extravagances of the earlier schools, and we are now beginning to see these problems in a better perspective. Yet it cannot be denied that, from the standpoint of a spiritual philosophy, the theories which are being advanced even by more broadminded investigators in this realm regarding man's psychic constitution are even today very disappointing.

In the first place we have to reckon with the fact that, seduced by the possibilities offered by the psychological interpretation of experience, many of these thinkers have gone to inordinate lengths in subordinating the body to the soul. They have exaggerated greatly the capacity of the organism to respond to mental impulses from within. It was indeed a big step forward to discover that all sorts of apparently purely physical disabilities were really psychological in origin and disappeared almost miraculously when the mind became readjusted. But the principle has evidently been far too over-confidently applied. Apart from the two extremes of the hysterical subject whose body reflects emotional states to an almost incredible degree, and the *yogi* who is really controlling his organism from the mental plane, the mass of humanity would seem to be conditioned in a very complete sense by diseased states of the physical organism (particularly of the nervous system) which can be attacked directly on the ground level with a resulting indirect

benefit to the mind. Electricity may yet prove to be a far more effective therapeutic agency than the exponents of "depth psychology" are today prepared to admit.

But apart from this consideration the psychologists disappoint us seriously even in their own field. And this is particularly true of the psycho-analysts. The general impression which we receive from these labyrinthine medico-theological speculations is one of confusion and uncertainty. And this is, after all, only to be expected. For we can scarcely believe that a scientific, and more especially a medical, training can constitute the best of foundations for philosophical thought—and particularly so when we are concerned with such subtle and elusive problems as those which meet us in this field. The theories of the majority of these psychologists are quite exceptionally obscure and inconsequent, when they are not actually downright silly. So much so, indeed, that the most difficult task which falls upon the critic is that of creating, in justice to the author, a position which is sufficiently intelligible for one to be able to start work on it at all.

The deeper reason for this formlessness and ambiguity lies in the fact that the realities with which we are concerned in this realm of thought can be effectively dealt with only by employing the categories of a fundamentally spiritual philosophy. Attempt to describe them in terms of biological or materialistic conceptions and the result is necessarily confusion. The mind which seeks to interpret these mysteries—and they are often mysteries of a very deep order—must be elevated to the same plane as the truths which it is seeking to grasp. Otherwise the result is inevitably obscurity and perversity. Thus only can we account for the notable difference between the clear and consistent (although to our modern minds incomplete) analysis of spiritual states which we owe to transcendental thinkers such as the Schoolmen, the Indian psychologists or the Chinese sages, and the peculiarly turbid and involved presentations of the same realities by the medical psychologists. Metaphysics is not a luxury; it is the interior clarifying principle of more terrestrial knowledge.

One thing, at least, is perfectly clear: we are no longer concerned in this sphere with "science" in its ordinary accepted sense. For the investigator, in passing from the surface to the depths, has been constrained to modify his ways of thinking to such a degree that he has for all intents and purposes moved into a different field of thought in which, whether he realizes the fact or not, he is involved with processes which can be effectively dealt with only by calling freely upon one's intuitive and even mystical perceptions.

In the early stages of this advance the issues were still comparatively clear. While psychology concerned itself only with the more superficial levels of consciousness, the technique of ordinary

scientific research could be applied easily enough to the behaviour of man, who was considered by the investigator almost entirely from the point of view of his adaptations as a rational being. But with the advent of the New Psychology the situation became significantly changed. For a considerable period therapists struggled alone in the attempt to treat this newly discovered region of the "unconscious" as a normal subject for scientific research. It was assumed that truth in this sphere could be elucidated by the same process of impersonal and exact observation which is employed in, say, physics and chemistry. But the more imaginative students of the subject were eventually compelled to recognize the fact that the deeper life of human beings could be effectively understood only by those who had developed an aesthetic and mystical rather than a scientific type of consciousness, and who were as a result able to evolve and manipulate symbols and images which had no significance for ordinary scientific thought.

Further, and what was more disconcerting, they found that they were becoming committed to an entirely different conception of Reality from that on which the scientific investigator is accustomed to work. For they discovered that the realm of the "subjective" seemed to be as real as that of the "objective", that the two appeared, in fact, as twin aspects of a more fundamental order of being lying behind and within them both.

But to think in this fashion is to be obliged to abandon forever the ideal, powerfully fostered by the tradition of orthodox science of a purely objective conception of truth. For the laws of science apply only to one of the two elements in the complex. Further, in order to understand the nature of the "subjective" it is necessary to submit to an unfamiliar and arduous type of discipline. For until a true spiritual consciousness has been developed by this means the terminology and imagery of the masters of the inner life remain unintelligible to us.

Yet however distasteful the situation may be to the more rigorous type of scientist, it would seem to be inescapable. For it is plain that the kind of thinking which is relevant to the world of inanimate objects cannot be relevant also to that of the life of the soul. The road which passes inwards beyond the frontiers of mere external observation leads into a region controlled by the technique of Spiritual Science. And that technique can be employed only by those who have quickened and disciplined that emotional side of the nature which remains largely undeveloped in those whose training has been exclusively scientific.

It is true, of course, that there are schools of psychologists, of which the Freudians are the most outstanding representatives, who cling tenaciously to the idea that even in this field they are proceeding with the strictest scientific rigour. But it should be plain that the

subject-matter in this field is so extraordinarily plastic and so susceptible to manipulation in every possible direction that almost any conceivable theory or interpretation can be plausibly supported by an impressive mass of "evidence". Certain broad structures have of course been brought into relief by this method; but this is not what is meant by "science" in the accepted sense of the term.

As for the alleged confirmations of such theories by the results achieved in the clinic, one can only suggest, following such a critic as Prinzhorn, that ideology in this field has largely a secondary character. It may be of great assistance to the operator—just as tea-leaves or playing-cards are of assistance to the clairvoyant in providing her with a mechanism for bringing her psychic powers to a point of focus. But the essential source of any real therapeutic achievement is to be sought in the physician's native powers of intuition, divination and imaginative sympathy, to which all else is relative. Otherwise we should not find that wise, sensitive and kindly Auntie Elsie can often calm, direct and release where "science", in spite of all its elaborate therapeutic apparatus, is impotent.¹

But in any case problems of technique and classification are not really fundamental in character. Let the psychologists, if they wish to, maintain their claim that they are men of science in the ordinary sense of the term. What really concerns us, if we are realistic in our outlook, is to determine how far our higher spiritual values are being threatened by the theories and practice of thinkers whose approach to the problem is to a marked degree materialistic in character.

And the danger is indeed very real. For one must realize that the scientist in this field is not merely, as in the realm of sociology, ignoring the more interior factors in our experience, but boldly venturing to evaluate and interpret them from his own all too terrestrial standpoint. And this means that he is continually engaged in translating the spiritual to the plane of the biological, converting the transcendental into the psychological, mechanizing the organic, reducing metaphysics to physics, and generally measuring the higher by the lower. There is here involved no explicit repudiation of the mystical. But we have to reckon with an evasive and misleading type of emphasis which, since it is always in the direction of stressing the tangible at the expense of the indefinable, has the effect of subtly distorting our whole conception of man's spiritual nature and activity.

It is impossible to deny that the development of the anthropological sciences has made for disconcerting misgivings regarding

¹ As to the contention that nobody can speak with authority on these matters until he has been "properly analysed", all one can say is that those theories according to which analysis is the sole reliable technique for producing psychological liberation are themselves still for weighty reasons subject to question, so that the familiar charge "you have no right to criticize me until you have yourself been treated" falls to the ground.

the integrity of the scientific mind. The early successes of science rightly enough provoked a universal appreciation of the qualities which lay behind its achievements. These newly-won regions of reality had, it was clear, been wrested from Nature at the cost of a notable self-effacement, patience and discipline. But as the field of exploration continued to widen it gradually became evident to the more discerning that this detached, impersonal and determined investigator was only really to be trusted when his deeper spiritual sympathies were *least* involved in his researches, when the possibility of disturbance from his unregenerate ego was at a minimum. Hence one could feel comparatively safe with him when he was dealing with the properties of chemicals or the disposition of geological strata, for here the quality of his soul life had no marked effect upon the development of his theories; it might, indeed, affect the question of whether he reached the point of making such discoveries at all, but the discoveries themselves as such remained perfectly valid. The determining factors involved were principally clear-headedness, accuracy, patience and, except in the case of the creators of the great revolutionary hypotheses, a relatively inferior order of imagination. But to the degree that he drew nearer by the pathway of sociology to the deeper and more spiritual aspects of knowledge, to the degree that his attention became shifted from the inanimate to the animate, the defects of his fundamental spiritual constitution vitiated more and more completely the value of his conclusions. The quality of the man himself began to tell to a greater and greater degree.

The more closely we approach the central, interior elements in our experience, the more serious is the effect of materialism and vitalism in distorting our picture of reality. And when at length we become concerned with the basic problems of human existence the danger that the truth will be perverted by the personality of the investigator reaches its maximum. We enter a realm in which the thinker who is not properly liberated from his biological self can by his theories pervert the spiritual life of his fellow-men at the very roots. No false evaluation of the character of the inanimate world can cause a tithe of the havoc which results from a false evaluation of the inner world of thought and feeling. For if the deeper springs of life are poisoned the whole organism becomes diseased.

There are many ways, of course, in which one could proceed in analysing the very serious situation which is thus brought into existence, but I think that the best approach is by way of examining the psychologist's conception of the self of man. For it is clear that we are here presented with the central element in the whole problem. If on the one hand the soul is merely a biological organism, then all the individual's intuitions and visions regarding the existence of a wider world of spiritual reality of which our physical life is but a

part are revealed as mere delusions, forms of wishful thinking. If, on the contrary, it appears that this biological interpretation is inadequate and superficial, then it is for the psychologists to revise their assumptions regarding the nature of reality. We will begin, then, with the ego.

2. *The Roots of Being*

The essential contribution made to modern thought by the New Psychology lies in the relation which it has established between the inner and the outer consciousness of man, between the "night" and the "day" life of the soul. It has performed an important work, largely overdue, of putting *homo sapiens* in his place. Our outlook, as children of the twentieth century, has been powerfully determined by the influence of western rationalism, and as a result we have been led to emphasize the achievements of reason to an excessive degree at the expense of the psychic dynamic which in one direction distorts and in the other elevates its processes. We have been reluctant to admit how extensively our thinking is determined from within. Nineteenth-century Liberalism, with its persistent tendency to affirm ideals while shrinking from facing the psychological problems involved in attaining them, appears as the characteristic expression of this superficial state of mind. For not only was it rationalistic—in the sense that it concentrated more on intellectual aims than on psychological implications—but it was largely negative in its emphasis, being concerned before everything more to preserve the rights of the individual from encroachment than to deepen and foster the life within him which it was so concerned to provide with an outlet.

The effect of the researches of modern psychology has been to demonstrate to us all pretty convincingly that what we take for objective reasoning is, to a much greater degree than we previously suspected, "motivated" rationalization. It does not teach, of course, that we are purely irrational beings. For the psychologist who is demonstrating to us the extent of our perversity must, by definition, be considered as rational for him to be in a position to perform this office at all. There must necessarily be left somewhere an island of reality, however restricted, from which we can survey in safety the psychic phantasmagoria around us. Yet psychology *does* teach, and with justification, that reason, in spite of all the incense which is burnt at its shrine, is engaged on an extensive scale in playing the dubious role of an accomplice after the psychic act.

We here become involved with the familiar conception of the "unconscious mind". I will make no attempt to examine it closely here. As is well known, it offers serious psychological difficulties which have been carefully set forth by responsible critics of the

doctrine. In my own view one of the most important limitations of the theory lies in the fact that it has been framed by thinkers who, through the materialistic nature of their sympathies, are indifferent to the possibility that man may actually live in a far wider environment than that disclosed by his physical senses. As a result he is not only continually registering the influence of suprasensible forces, but he is also capable of being consciously active on other planes of being when in a condition of sleep or trance. Naturally when the experiences which thus arise are interpreted as being purely intrapsychic in character and referred exclusively to the subject's "unconscious", endless confusions result. To this important point I shall return later.

But the really fundamental problem which we have here to consider is that of the basic source of man's psychic energy. The Freudian teaching is, of course, that the dynamic of the libido is derived solely from the primitive levels of the Unconscious. At the roots of our being are the blind, dark, egoistic urges of the Id which only become acceptable when they have been converted by the influences of the objectively-minded minority amongst us into forces of a civilizing type. However beautiful the blossoms on the tree, its roots penetrate deep down into the primeval slime from which everything—including the doctrines of Freud themselves—has originally emerged.

To this interpretation of our psychological experience most of us feel a deep intuitive repugnance. It is one thing to suggest that our sickness, our vicious traits and our neurotic limitations can plausibly be traced back to deep-seated disturbances at the foundation of our animal nature. That is an idea which, although it cannot be supported by absolutely compulsive scientific proofs, certainly should not provoke any emancipated person to emotional resistance. For it is just this sort of situation which we should expect research in these regions to disclose to us. Evil is reversion to the primitive and nothing else.

But it is an entirely different matter when it is suggested to us that the higher side of our nature is simply *derivative* from the animal. For in the first place this commits us to an emergent philosophy of life which, as already indicated in an earlier chapter, involves us with all sorts of technical difficulties which are by no means easy to resolve. Moreover, both our intuitions and our experience incline us to the belief that the formulation is intolerably narrow. We are impelled to sympathize with the views of those psychologists who, like Jung and Adler, finding the dark and sex-impregnated atmosphere of Freudian ideology excessively oppressive and obscure, have embraced a wider conception of psychic dynamic: at the basis of our nature is a primal energy which finds expression through a number of different channels of which sex is only one.

Even with this, however, we have not reached the end of the matter. Although we may have rejected this unduly restricted conception of the libido, we still cannot be content with a purely biological interpretation of our human experience. For we have to reckon with the impressive religious doctrine that man is something more than a product of Nature, that he is a creature in whom biological processes (which are ultimately of God) are in some mysterious way polarized and dominated by higher processes of the Spirit.

For the purpose of our present enquiry this teaching is of immense importance, for the reason that it commits us to a completely different approach to the problem of psychological creativeness from that followed by the vitalists. So far from regarding egoistic, primitive desire as the primary urge which is diverted by civilizing influences into creative channels of expression, the religious philosopher takes the view that the basic reality is Divine Energy which in the case of the mass of mankind has been appropriated by the soul for its unregenerate purposes. The forms of personal desire are *not* the raw material which may under favourable influences be made use of for higher ends, but the inversions of true, spiritual forms, the reflected images of Reality on the dark waters of illusion. All power is essentially from *above*; but man perverts it through having inwardly lost touch with the Light. The great primary reality is Consciousness; darkness, ignorance and unconsciousness, so far from being the roots of the psychic tree, appear rather as the result of the misuse of transcendental power. Hence instead of thinking of our higher energies as being the "sublimation" of lower ones, we must begin at the Centre with God as the supreme Source of all life, and regard our baser activities as the result of a process of degradation. The tree of Yggdrasil has its roots, not in the earth, but in the sky.

Let us now from this point of view consider the nature and activity of the higher self of man. For the empiricist the transcendental ego is, of course, merely a myth, an unjustified postulate, an "idea" for the reality of which no reliable "evidence" is available. But we may safely accept the principle that it is just as legitimate to examine ourselves from the inside as mystics as to examine ourselves from the outside as men of science. And when we do so—and thus align ourselves with the great tradition of religion—we are driven to conclude that the situation cannot be adequately explained in purely biological terms.

We are prepared to do full justice to the claims of the empiricists and behaviourists, of whatever school: men and women, to a far greater degree than the ordinary person is willing to admit, *are* determined in their thoughts, acts and feelings by biological forces. In a very strict sense they are products of their environment. And

in so far as such thinkers as Freud and Marx provide us with a picture of the way in which they merely reflect and reproduce the character of their surroundings we may give them full credit for their insight. The more commonplace and unredeemed people are, the more obliterated is the divine image within them, the more completely can their activities be explained in such terms.

But this does not exhaust our experience of the human consciousness. It is the contention of the religious thinker that within each individual, however outwardly degraded he may be, there is a centre which is essentially divine and which derives its energy from a realm of being which is eternal, and of which the world of nature is but a shadow and a reflex. And by suitable disciplines he can enter more and more completely into association with this indwelling principle, so that at a certain point he can actually *know* by direct experience that in his innermost consciousness he is one with the Great Spirit.

The relation of this higher self within us to the body in which it is active is naturally very difficult to describe. But the essence of the matter would seem to be that when we—our ordinary waking selves—are attuned to it we know, by some strange process of rapport, that in our innermost being we participate in a Consciousness which exists eternally within and beyond the limitations of space and time. And when it is thus in a condition of elevation the processes of the mind acquire a new and a different character; the individual is quite decisively aware that they are *not* determined from below by biological influences as are, it must be freely admitted, the great mass of our ordinary thoughts. Instead they reflect, in the phenomenal realm, the character of a transcendental reality. They derive no advantage from the fact that they are momentarily associated with the processes of a physical brain. And neither are they the products of experience gained in a physical body; their function, on the contrary, is to direct and interpret that experience from a higher level, to relate it to the world of Eternity.

When in this state of exaltation the contemplative knows perfectly clearly that he is, to some degree at least, alive and active in that deathless realm of spirit in which his essential self dwells, and that he is thinking, not primarily with the brain, but with a non-physical mind which is using the brain as its instrument. It is true, of course, that in order for that instrument, as well as the rest of the physical organism, to function properly certain energies must be drawn upon from the biological realm of existence. But they are minimal, and the more advanced the aspirant is spiritually the smaller the degree to which it is necessary for him to vitalize his body from below. The important point, however, is that these lower energies do not determine the higher processes with which they are associated, but are determined by them. They simply serve

to maintain the life of the vehicle which the spirit is using for its purposes.

3. *Reason and Inspiration*

So much for the religious philosopher's conception of the self. We must now consider the part played by the reason in organizing its activities.

The first point of which we have to take note is that amongst the processes of life the function of the mind is essentially of a secondary character. The primary element is always psychic energy, from whatever source it may be derived. Life manifests in terms of form, which it is the province of the intellect to control. But without the indwelling vital power, that form is as nothing. Whether man is governed by his lower or by his higher nature he is always, once he is fully awakened, primarily a creature of impulse and inspiration. The only alternatives before him are those of being moved to action by his biological or by his spiritual self. It is therefore seriously misleading to speak of controlling emotion by "reason". "Realism" is simply libido informing correct, as opposed to egoistically determined and phantastic, ideas. Its function is restricted to that of harmonizing the expansive life of the ego with the actualities of objective existence. Although in giving expression to an impulse we make use of our rational faculties in order to afford it proper objective realization, to subordinate it to the facts of space and time, impulse itself is always beyond our control. We cannot, except in a very limited fashion, induce it at will, and we can understand only very partially where it comes from and how it acts. Nothing can destroy it; all that is open to us is to elevate the level of its manifestation.

On whatever plane consciousness is active, it is only the point of focus of impulses which lie within a far wider and more interior sphere of being. Just as the ultimate origins of the dark images of desire lie infinitely deep in the well of instinct, so do the ultimate origins of the bright images of spiritual apprehension have their origin in the highest and most holy heavens. Both the neurotic and the perfected mystic see into life out of unfathomable depths. And in relation to both of them, reason controls only an intermediate neutral zone of more or less devitalized formal knowledge which separates two zones of obscurity. But whereas at the heart of the obscurity which lies below the intellectual plane there is (for human beings at least) darkness and potential extinction, that which lies beyond it is essentially the result of the effect upon us of an abundance of light to which we cannot yet adjust ourselves.

In the first case, as we all know, we have to do with regressive impulses which thwart the soul's healthy and direct responses to

reality. In the second, however, it is a question of the preliminary and confused registration of realities which are far beyond our present grasp, intimations regarding fields of truth yet to be conquered, premonitory glimpses of higher possibilities before us.

Finally, we must consider the difference in the character of rational activity according to whether it is determined from above or below the threshold of "reason". It may safely be affirmed that we are here concerned with a distinction which is of radical importance for the future development of our western consciousness.

Now that the bewilderment attending our first dizzy Freud-conducted plunge into the Unconscious is at last beginning to give way to sanity, one fundamental fact is emerging from the mists and that is that the exponents of the New Psychology have failed most seriously to distinguish between supra- and infra-rational processes, or between unconsciousness and "superconsciousness". They have, in fact, resorted to the simplification of reducing all non-rational processes to the dead level of the primitive. Hence we hear from them a great deal about the "pre-logical" and the "precategorical" (the way of thinking adopted by savages, children and women), and nothing regarding the "post-logical" or "super-categorical" which represents so evidently its complement. "Sublimation" is admittedly recognized. But it reaches no higher level than the release of libido through the accepted channels of constructive social activity in accordance with the "reality principle". Regarding the heights corresponding to the depths the psychologist is almost always silent, evasive or confused.

Not a little of the responsibility for this disastrous situation rests with our religious thinkers. For through their lack of detailed knowledge of the supra-rational life of the soul they have no *positive* contribution to offer when it becomes necessary to counteract the reduction of all our interior life to the primordial level. They have shown themselves competent enough in demonstrating the materialistic bias of analytical psychology. But their knowledge of the vast realm of trans-rational experience which represents the opposite pole of Freudism is clearly impoverished. Hence all that mass of myths, allegories and symbols found all over the world which ought properly to receive a *spiritual* interpretation, and the significance of which is no longer properly appreciated by philosophers with a narrow theological background, have been appropriated instead by thinkers who can see in them only expressions of biological processes. Of which more in the next chapter.

As many modern philosophers are beginning to realize, the first step in extricating ourselves from this confusion is to distinguish clearly between infra-rational "instinct" and supra-rational "intuition". In the first case the mind is acting in the service of

biological impulse. When this happens on the non-human plane what is involved is conformity to natural order. That is to say, the creature is moved to achieve certain strictly limited ends in accordance with its distinctive nature—a moth to behave as a moth, a crab to live the life of a crab, a dog to pursue the ends of a dog, and so on. There is no possibility of unfolding any higher powers; the surrounding world is known and reacted to entirely from the standpoint of a specialized organism. Each lives and moves "after its kind".

In other words instinct is essentially an instrument for furthering the purposes of the biological organism. It directs that organism towards such primitive ends as sexual propagation, self-preservation, solidarity with a group which stands in a hostile or indifferent relation to other groups. But it never—and this is the point—raises it above the level on which it originally emerged.

In man, however, the drive of passion can find expression in several different ways. In the first case the instincts can be subordinated to the higher purposes of the individual's life—as when we simply and decently eat, sleep and appropriate air and sunlight, not merely in the legitimate enjoyment of such activities, but in order to maintain our bodies as vehicles of a still higher order of life.

Or in the second place they can become inflamed and hypertrophied, when they acquire a power and range of expression which in the case of an animal is impossible. Impossible, for the reason that this extension of the range of desire can be brought about only by a process of mentalization; the intellect debases its powers in order to multiply sensational satisfactions. We then have the spectacle of biological energy animating an ever wider range of mind-created images, with the result that life expands limitlessly on the plane of what is known as the false infinite, the end of which is chaos and madness, the apotheosis of insensate egoism.

Finally, the instinctive drive can be "sublimated". This means that instinct, in so far as it is pressed into the services of egoism, has to be raised to a higher power. On more ordinary levels destruction and sensational indulgence are then replaced by creative social activity, "citizenship", and the like. But on a higher level still the energy of the primitive ego is transmuted in an even more complete fashion. Once the individual addresses himself unreservedly to the spiritual path he finds that his animal nature must be conquered in a far more radical fashion than that allowed for by social theory. Everything that the biological self holds dear must be forgone, and then reappropriated from a new centre—the "second death".

The life of instinct, like all life, is holy. But it is a life which is fully appropriate only to another order of creation. As human beings we are called upon to realize the divine in a higher mode.

And here we must not mislead ourselves by confounding the biological and the spiritual under the deceptive conception of "vitalism", reducing all our activities to the level of hormic urges. Certainly they are both manifestations of a mysterious primal Energy. But, as every true mystic knows, whereas man draws upon that Energy from above, the animal does so from below. The life of the first is rooted in Consciousness, that of the second in Unconsciousness. And though this Consciousness and this Unconsciousness are ultimately one, in terms of human psychology they are momentarily differentiated. This is sufficiently indicated by the experience of those who, weary of the sterility of intellectualism, attempt misguidedly to live by vital impulse. There must be, in some form or other, a release of libido, which makes for expansion, fire, glory, fulness, a transcendence of the oppressive limits of one's egoism. But whereas at the heart of instinctive expansion there is, for human beings, fear, instability and misery, at the heart of spiritual expansion there is equilibrium and peace.

With the effect of instinctive urges in conditioning our mental processes from *below*, the psychologists have made us sufficiently familiar. But it is far more difficult to give an intelligible account of our thinking when, under the light of the Spirit, it is conditioned from *above*. We can see that, as has been pointed out by Radhakrishnan,¹ though both infra- and supra-rational processes are immediate and dynamic, and active in the very core of the personality, the second involves a response by the whole of the individual's being, an integrated expression of the powers of the soul. But when we attempt to give these realizations a sharper definition we find ourselves in a difficult region of thought.

This much, however, would seem to be clear. Whereas reason in the services of egoistic desire produces motivated rationalization, the lesser masquerading as the wider truth, in the services of the Spirit it produces a manifestation of creative order, a vision of those forms of life which express the character of the indwelling life of God, and which are elements in the great universal harmony. In other words, to the degree that we are liberated from bondage to egoistic illusion we see the cosmos as it really is. The Divine within us impels the soul to release its energies, not in contradiction to, but in consonance with, the true structure of the universe.

And the characteristic intellectual manifestation of this response is intuition, the essence of which lies in the fact that the individual becomes sensitive to a wider order of truth than reason can momentarily organize or justify. The illuminated mind perceives in anticipation the character of an Order which underlies and includes all those particular regions of experience which are controlled by our

¹ His views have been most usefully summarized by Professor Joad in his *Counter Attack from the East* (1933). See p. 81.

more orthodox categories of thought. There is thus an *effect* of irrationality as if the intellect was at the mercy of prejudice and phantasy. For both above and below the plane of reason the processes of the mind are immediate and intensive. But in reality the accepted pattern is modified or rejected in virtue of a response to a more comprehensive order of truth. And this is confirmed by the fact that with the slow growth of experience what appeared first as irrationality is seen to be really superior discernment.

More important, however, than the formal aspect of the situation is the psychological. For when the mind is interiorly responsive to the Light it exercises its powers in *freedom*. What is perceived is necessarily limited. But the limitation is determined in a perfectly orderly and natural fashion by the range of the individual's perception and not by the distorting activity of unregenerate desire. Instead of acquiring a false vision through the energy of unsublimated passion it is polarized, as it were, from above, with the result that it apprehends the true pattern of things. In the most precise sense of the term the individual sees with the eye of the Spirit. And what he thus perceives is a far wider and deeper world than that which is disclosed to the sensual understanding.

The experience involved, even though it be but rarely enjoyed, is unmistakable. One escapes from the sphere of the merely cerebral and intellectual; there is no question of cold and abstract ratiocination. But instead of having a disquieting sense of being impelled forward by excitement and desire, conditioned by some force or other within the natural realm, one enjoys a blessed and calm consciousness of being an instrument—but this time a willing and responsible instrument—of a Power which at once releases and purifies the personality, and at the same time moves it to activities which are deeply realistic and completely consonant with the welfare of every other living being. Instead of being drawn by passion into a narrow and oppressive zone of intense and disturbing activity which the soul knows all the time to have the seeds of its own negation within it, the contemplative has a wonderful feeling of expansion, derived not from the inflation of his own ego, but from voluntary participation in something which is infinitely greater and more real than himself.

It is the difference between being—as we significantly say—“swept away” by desire, and realizing oneself by submission to the sustaining and liberating influence of the Whole. Instead of madness there is sanity, instead of restlessness there is repose, instead of craving there is repletion, instead of localization there is universalization. In a word, one is working with, rather than against, the creative forces in the universe. And the soul as a result knows peace.

4. *Psychology and Reality*

We have considered the reasons for conceiving of the self of man as being essentially spiritual in nature. But that self represents only the subjective pole of the equation. Its objective equivalent will be the spiritual universe—by which I mean the universe as it presents itself to the eye of the individual who has emancipated himself from the limitations of his lower nature. Naturally, except in so far as we can judge from the utterances of the great masters of the spiritual life, we can at present gain only a very imperfect notion of its character. But of this at least we can be assured: even the person who is sensitive to the Within only to a lesser degree will receive a widely different picture of the world from that which presents itself to those who are still unawakened on this plane of consciousness.

And this fact has a very definite bearing upon the problem of psychotherapy. The situation which arises when a more spiritual type of personality subjects himself to psychological treatment is familiar enough. In so far as the individual fails to measure up to normal standards the therapist can be of great assistance to him. But at a certain point the patient begins to realize that the world to which he is being invited to adapt himself is in many directions superficial, restricted, simplified or even painfully bourgeois in character. The artists, the poets and the mystics in our midst are sensitive to all sorts of finer influences upon their organisms as a result of which their conception of the real world is at once wider and more subtle than that entertained by the physician who is attempting to aid them in the clinic when they get into difficulties. And this remains true even though they may have also definitely neurotic characteristics. For it is just the strain imposed upon more spiritual natures by living in a corrupted civilization which causes them to break down.

This fact, it may be remarked, is recognized by all practitioners who have any claims to enlightenment. They cannot fail to perceive that in respect of many issues it is they themselves who are playing the part of the patient, and that they are confronted with personalities whose insight in certain directions often confounds the calculations of professional science.

The explanation of this paradoxical situation is not far to seek. The object of all therapeutic treatment is to induce the patient to forsake the realm of phantasy and to develop his powers in relation to what the analyst characteristically describes as "reality"—and what the philosopher would prefer to describe as "actuality". But this, as we have already seen, obviously implies that the therapist himself is in touch with the Real; you cannot deal with

aberrations unless you yourself are in possession of a norm to which they can be referred. The physician must have been there first. Hence we find Jung speaking of "the doctor's attitude, which is accepted as one suitable to life's demands, and normal in its human relationships".

But is it really "suitable to life's demands"? The answer would seem to be: yes and no. The general impression which one gathers from the study of the literature is that the mental healer can show great understanding and ability in dealing with those people who have fallen *below* the level of ordinary humanity, but that he is at a loss in handling those who, although they are in difficulties, are yet possessed of a higher type of consciousness than the average. The best type of doctor is a man who is humane, moral, sympathetic—but not really capable of penetrating to the deeper mysteries of the spiritual life. He may, indeed, set a high value on religious experience, and encourage his patients to develop their religious potentialities. But only very rarely has he himself any profound experience of religion. And the consequence is that whenever he becomes involved with deeper spiritual issues his sense of quality fails him and he has no really effective guidance to offer his patient. And even if he has a certain understanding, he will lack that powerful dynamic influence which comes only from the passionate living of the mystical life with all its trials, ardours, and sacrifices. Or so, at least, the religious thinker would affirm.

The weakness of the psychologist's position can best be indicated, perhaps, by applying to it his own theories. His aim is to liberate the mind of his patients from undesirable unconscious influences, influences which are, rightly enough, represented as being of a very subtle and obstinate type. But this discovery has a double-edged significance. For it is clear that the more evidence you accumulate to demonstrate the subordination of our reason to our passions, the more do your own arguments themselves become suspect. If it is forcibly suggested to us that we all rationalize our desires to a far greater degree than we used to believe, if there is scarcely any limit to the resourcefulness of the deeper self in deceiving us as to our true motives—then we naturally begin to wonder how far the analyst's own theories are to be regarded as being above suspicion. And these misgivings are only confirmed by a consideration of the history of modern psychological theory. Freud has written that "every unsolved repression in the physician corresponds . . . to a 'blind spot' in his analytical perception". And surely enough we find Jung virtually accusing Freud of having been blinded by his own unconscious to certain very important facts which he, Jung, thanks to his greater freedom from such repressions, is able to perceive without difficulty. And Jung himself has been treated by Adler in the same fashion.

What guarantee have we, therefore, that any one of these theorists has found his way to an adequate conception of reality? His own conviction that he is on the right road affords, as we have seen, no warrant that he is genuinely illuminated, for all determination by prejudice is by definition effected below the plane of rational consciousness. To dispute with him is obviously useless. We are thrown back, therefore, on common sense.

And what common sense suggests to us is that the great majority of therapists, although emancipated to a gratifying degree from subjective prejudice, still appear to be limited by certain deep-seated complexes which can be resolved only by a more profound type of spiritual discipline than that to which they have so far subjected themselves. And this finds expression most notably in the very definite materialistic bias which they have acquired through their scientific and medical training, and which the resources at their disposal do not enable them to overcome. Their conception of "reality", in fact, may be said to bear the same relation to that of a disciplined spiritual seer as the phantasies of the neurotics whom they are treating bear to their own wisely human, but sense-conditioned, philosophy of life.

The consequences of all this are naturally serious. For the whole tendency of the therapist's thinking is in the direction of preoccupation with the depths rather than with the heights, with the result that he has far less understanding of the secret founts of creativeness in the soul than he has of the retrograde influences by which it is conditioned.

The problem is somewhat subtle. For both those impressions and realizations which relate to regressive psychological states and those which involve the transcendence of ordinary experience have—in the early stages at least—much the same character: queer, intuitive, evasive impressions which flash upon the mind, subtle attractions and repulsions that defy analysis, registrations which cannot momentarily be accommodated in the individual's accepted scheme.

And this circumstance opens the door to certain dangerous possibilities. For when a sensitive person responds in this manner to an order of spiritual truth which lies *ahead* of that which is accepted by the more orthodox, when he intuitively rejects, in the light of still higher realizations, the assumptions on which his physician is working, when the artist or the mystic within him responds to some hidden beauty or power to which the mass of men are blind—his reactions have the same *formal* character as those of the sick soul who is either flinching from realities or embracing some delusive phantasy. In other words, the incipient will appear as the regressive, the inspirational as the infantile, and the transcendence of the rationally organized will appear as mere prejudice.

against it. And unless we have to do with a psychologist who is endowed with exceptional powers of divination the whole situation is likely to be misinterpreted in the most disastrous manner.

This principle finds expression not only in relation to understanding, but in relation to life and power as well. For the vitalist proceeds on the assumption that the problem for psychotherapy is that of releasing within the individual that primitive force which he describes as Libido, and which is conceived of as being the basic impulse also behind all the life of nature. On the evolutionary hypothesis there is a mighty urge sweeping upward through all the hierarchy of natural forms which receives its highest and most potent expression in man. And our task is to permit it as unimpeded expression within us as possible, so that sensory enjoyment, art and science may flourish to the utmost. The aim of psychological treatment is to liberate the processes of Life.

Stimulating as this conception is, we have yet to ask whether it truly enables us to gain a real grip upon our human problems. I would suggest that it does not, and that we can turn with far greater confidence to the great classical conception, common to all religious schools of thought, that man is fundamentally constituted of the three components of body, soul and spirit. In other words, within him that which is beyond and above nature has conjoined itself with that which is one with the beasts of the field. Although we are called upon to live within the natural world and are dependent upon it, in our inmost essence we are all divine, spiritual beings.

The conclusion can only be that in the case of developed personalities no great results will ever be achieved by persuading them to identify themselves with the instinctive life of nature. If they are suffering, as they inevitably will, from neuroses and maladjustments, this will not be primarily because they have lost primitive virtue but because, having outgrown this phase of fulfilment, they have not yet succeeded in identifying themselves with the transcendental reality within them. Release will come, not from realigning themselves with their deep-rooted and ancient biological past, not from immersion in the "racial unconscious", but from concentrating upon that which lies beyond the Flux. In order to know again the meaning of life they must be born anew of the Spirit.

It is true enough that such a renewal, when once it is attained, brings with it a harmonious relation to the realm of natural forces. But it is a completely different relation from that experienced by the unawakened soul who has not yet realized the meaning of true self-consciousness. And this means something even more radical than "sublimation" as it is understood by the ordinary psychologist. All one can say is that a time is reached when the seeker after

reality becomes associated with a deeper order of life than that which science knows as Libido.

Up to that point it has been a question of releasing psychic energy in a constructive and civilizing fashion, of adaptation to a wider social reality. But the individual still experiences the driving force within his being as a manifestation of biological life, another mode of that energy which causes the earth to spin on its axis, the flowers to grow and animals to multiply. There comes a point, however, when he receives a mystical revelation regarding his relation as a self-conscious being to this ultimate Source of Life. And he then knows inwardly and unmistakably that he is concerned with something more transcendent than vital force. He finds himself obliged to reckon with such elements as holiness, a sense of complete dependence on the Divine, contact with the realm of the Eternal, with something which paradoxically enough maintains life just by virtue of its dissociation from it. And psychologically and morally such realizations find expression in certain qualities of calm, humility, reverence and sweetness which are never engendered by biological vitalization alone. It is a question not of a difference in kind but of a difference in degree, of being energized from the other side of an Abyss.

5. *Psychology and Fate*

And now to consider some of the more important ways in which the assumptions of the orthodox tradition find expression in limiting the capacity of the therapist to lead his patients back to reality.

We have here first of all to reckon with an important element in our human experience which, although it is as basic as any other is peculiarly liable to escape detection in any survey of the problem I mean the activity of what we know as Fate.

If we study any treatise on psychology which is not based on religious assumptions—in other words the overwhelming majority of those at present in circulation—we find that the situation of the individual who is seeking to come to terms with his life's problems is considered as being pretty well equivalent to that of the person who is seeking advice regarding, say, diet or reading-matter. That is to say, it is assumed that the significance of the situation lies primarily in the choices which he makes, and not in the opportunities afforded him by circumstances for exercising them. The maladjusted personality, like Alice, nibbles a little bit from one side or other of the mushroom according to his estimate of his momentary needs. But the mushroom itself is assumed to be available in every case.

But is it? In the case of the lesser experiences of life the principle will obviously apply. In normal times at least we can increase or decrease our consumption of fresh air, novels, starch, flirtation, lesser changes of scenery, games, films and gardening, pretty much as we think fit. Our resources are adequate to our needs. But beyond that point the character of the situation changes. Even the most resourceful psychologist can do no more than provide us with general principles which are applicable only to *types* of events. He can teach us up to a point how to deal with danger, insomnia, fear, woman, food, overwork, exoticism. There are a wide range of experiences the significance of which lies in the fact that they are typical: the exact circumstances in which we become acquainted with, say, university life, litigation, unemployment, sexual passion, treachery, notoriety, are not from this point of view of major importance; what matters is our initiation into a certain order of experience. It is not the particular occasion that counts, but its contribution to our general sophistication. One murder, newspaper office, mistress, published novel, political adventure, is from this point of view as educative as another; they all go towards providing us with what may be described as representative experience.

In addition, of course, the psychologist can translate this situation to the concrete plane by helping us in the clinic to struggle with our individual and unique problems.

But all this leaves out of account a factor which enormously outweighs in importance anything which is achieved by psychological education alone—the fact that Destiny inexorably places certain things in our path, and not others. For we have to consider in the first place that our outlook is determined, not only by the generally educative character of our experience, but by its specific nature. Our minds and souls are shaped by *particular* places, people and situations. We do not marry “woman”, but Stella or Jane. And we live, not “in the country”, but in Sussex, Alsace or Maine. As a result we become, if we are sensitive, highly differentiated personalities. And we have little choice with regard to the forces which thus play upon us.

Secondly, although the psychologists may tell us what to do, something happens to us, our lives, apart from the minor flexibilities which are allowed to us by circumstance, are determined by events over which we have little or no control. It is true that, as psychology has fairly convincingly shown, numbers of apparently “chance” happenings are really the outcome of our deeper sympathies and fears; the neurotic does unquestionably often invite, or positively stage, the “accident” by which he is disabled. But all the same nothing can do away with the fact that our lives on a deeper level are shaped by the operations of Necessity. Individuals

cross our path in the most strange and disturbing fashion, governments change, books are published which revolutionize our outlook, our closest friends die or move to a remote country, by an extraordinary combination of circumstances we obtain or lose a position which alters our whole destiny, or war simply destroys the whole of our background at a stroke.

And it is just these factors which in the last resort make us what we are. As a result we have to recognize that the control exercised over life by the science of "psychology" is really far more restricted than would superficially appear. For the character and sequence of the events which take place in our lives far outweigh in importance any technique we may have developed for adjusting ourselves to them. Even if we consider the wildly remote possibility of an individual's relating himself irreproachably to his environment in accordance with the best clinical principles, it would still remain true that science can do nothing regarding the most significant factor of all—its unique character, which must simply be accepted as "given".

There is further to be considered the element of time. Things happen to us in a succession which is only very partially under our control; no man can foresee the blows or benedictions which Fate has in store for him. But what impels us most deeply to thought is the fact that the sequence is significant: events which occur in our lives completely beyond our power of choice correspond in a deep and exact fashion with our most inmost spiritual needs. Hence the powerful impression received by all spiritually awakened natures that we are not merely involved with the blind workings of "chance". On the contrary, we gradually come to realize that something of the order of "guidance" is at work. We are "sent" that which in the most profound sense we "need". And the more seriously we meditate on this mystery the more do we feel that behind all that happens is the Guiding Hand of God.

Regarded with the spiritual eye, the character of our life-pattern is seen to imply wisdom, mercy and design—in a word the operation of "Providence". And the danger of the scientific attitude to experience lies in the fact that it does not simply leave out of account the fact that events happen in the way they do, but that it remains *silent about its silence*, talking superficially instead about "adaptation to environment" and the like. The result is that we all too easily lose sight of the enormous fact that there is a momentous coincidence between our inner states and our involuntary history. And it is just in this unpredictable emergence of intensely relevant situations that the deepest meaning of life resides.

By the orthodox man of science such relationships are relegated to the realm of "chance". He assumes that certain of the conditions to which we are subject as human beings can be controlled by the

mind of man. Or at least science can take the first steps in this direction—as, for example, with vitamins, eugenics, the endocrine glands. So far so good. But if we analyse the factors which make for the success of our undertakings we find that they lie largely outside this field. The development of events depends to a marked degree upon such things as “casual” meetings, the “luck” of, say, engaging a competent and faithful secretary, the fact that a conference or lecture “goes” unexpectedly well, the change of fortune following, for example, shifting a school or a factory to a new region. And in the opposite direction failure is determined by similar elements working in an adverse sense—the “accident” that a key personality suddenly dies, the “curse” that hangs over a certain house, plans that perversely “go wrong”, and the like.

As I say, to the man of science it simply does not occur that such processes can be brought under the control of man's will. They are like those Patagonians who are reputed to have been vastly impressed by the boats in which some European travellers made their way from their ship to the shore, but to have regarded the ship itself as some sort of supernatural manifestation, beyond all human understanding. There are, however, thinkers of another school—students of the derided transcendental sciences—who affirm resolutely that such incomprehensible happenings can in a large manner be directed, and that if a man's consciousness is sufficiently deepened he will, so to speak, polarize the events around him in a new and creative fashion. It is well to bear in mind that what is “chance” for one system is order for another. Forces are here at work which are just as definite as those studied by the biologist and the sociologist, but of a widely different type and to be understood only by those who have learned to think along new and unfamiliar lines. It is simply a question of penetrating to a deeper level of relationships.

CHAPTER SIX

NATURAL AND SPIRITUAL

IN the last chapter we examined the limitations of scientific psychology chiefly in so far as they were expressed in insensitiveness to certain more subtle aspects of the human problem. We must now consider the still more serious difficulties which arise when

the investigator is called upon to interpret our responses to many transcendental elements in our experience. Here, as will be evident, the conflict between the values of a spiritual and a vitalistic philosophy are at their most acute.

What I have to say on this question implies certain views regarding the restrictions imposed on the psychologist by his technique. But it will be more convenient to consider their nature in the next chapter when we come to deal with the problem of the supraphysical realm.

I. *Beyond "Psychology"*

It must be frankly recognized that there is no more formidable challenge offered to religious belief than that which is being put forward today by the positivistic type of psychologist. For the thinker of this school is concerning himself with the very roots of our whole attitude to experience, and if he can demonstrate that any given conviction or attitude is neurotic in its origin he has succeeded in discrediting it in the most fundamental possible fashion. It is disconcerting enough to be told that one's notions regarding religion are denied by the findings of geology or biology; but it is very much more disconcerting to have them dismissed on the ground that they are appropriate only to an infantile type of psychology.

The attack is delivered from a dangerous angle. But how far can we afford to conclude that it has succeeded? When we attempt to answer this difficult question we discover that in the course of the few decades which have passed since the revolutionary theories of the New Psychology were first offered to the world the psychologists and the religious philosophers have been engaged in a searching and fruitful process of mutual criticism. On the one hand an enlightened psychology has exposed with a skilful and unerring hand many painfully neurotic elements in the traditional religious attitude; and on the other the insight of religion at its best has pierced to the weaknesses inherent in the attitude of a psychology which has still failed to emancipate itself completely from the materialism of the last century.

Very naturally the degree to which each party has exposed the limitations of the other is a question of considerable delicacy. But broadly speaking one may say that the outcome of the process is that religion at its best emerges from the ordeal with undiminished prestige, while religion as it is understood and practised by the great mass of believers is shown to present a remarkably large number of perverse and morbid features.

That we owe to modern psychology a greatly deepened insight into the manner in which subjective phantasy determines our

ponses to spiritual reality, it is impossible to deny. Man re-creates God in his own debased image and projects upon Him all his own manifold limitations; his conception of the divine is neurotically determined by his own shortcomings. And our modern therapists have shown us that the process is far more subtle and extensive than we were hitherto disposed to believe. Egoism, adolescent rebelliousness, sadism, masochism, fear—all such factors distort our conception of the world of spirit in the most insidious fashion. No person who has made a serious study of the findings of modern research in this field can avoid being impelled to a changed attitude towards what used formerly to be uncritically accepted as "religiosity". Asceticism, purity, trust in Providence, evangelistic zeal, theological contentiousness, "saintliness", mystical ecstasy, such cults as that of the Sacred Heart of Jesus—these phenomena appear to us in a very different light when their origins and affinities have been competently exposed. In all too many cases they prove to have a definitely neurotic basis, to represent an evasion rather than a submission to reality.

There is no need in this essay to undertake a review of the work which is being performed today by therapists in this field. Its value and import will be evident to every person who approaches the subject in a realistic and unbiassed spirit. What I wish to consider instead is the other side of the picture: the criticisms which can be levelled by the religious philosopher at the theory and practice of the type of psychologist who claims, in virtue of the peculiar technique which he has evolved, to be in a position to expose the illusory nature of certain deep spiritual insights and realizations which are actually the fruit of a more radical order of experience than his own. This is obviously a problem of major importance for everyone who has the future of religion at heart, and we cannot avoid giving it our careful attention. And it will be found that the issues involved are very much more subtle and complicated than those raised by the analysis of religious neuroticism, which, although a highly technical undertaking, presents us with no really embarrassing problems.

The point at issue between the materialist and the religious thinker is perfectly straightforward in character: everything turns, as we have seen, upon whether the powers and forces with which the individual believes himself to be in touch are inside or outside himself. In respect of experiences of a minor order the correctness of the interpretation advanced is obviously of lesser significance for the life of the spirit; whether or not one has actually seen an elemental or a "ghost", the deeper problems still remain to be solved. When, however, it is a question of realizations which are absolutely fundamental the question of whether the mind is or is not in touch with external reality becomes of momentous

importance. For the whole claim of religion as an influence for sustaining and uplifting the soul rests upon the assumption that our apprehensions in this realm are not merely of the order of "projections" from our own vitals, but relate to extra-mental realities, to elements in the universe which are, in fact, more "real" than any other with which we are capable of coming into association. Indeed, it is the claim of the religious philosopher that until the individual has experienced the reality of these powers and forces he is still, in spite of his control over the plane of the senses, living largely in a world of illusion.

In discussing this fundamental problem the first point to be emphasized is that we must once again give full recognition to the religious individual's hard-won and powerful feeling that he is in touch with realities which are outside himself. He has a profound conviction that he has established a relation with a realm of being which is at least as independent of his own existence as are any of the objects which are presented to him through his physical senses. And he has reached this point, not as a result of some chance visitation or artificial stimulation, but as the outcome of arduous and protracted labour.

For such realizations are not by any means lightly attained to. Only after long and patient discipline does the seeker come to the point of discerning the existence of spiritual realities which are just as independent of his own volition as are the natural phenomena which he apprehends with his physical senses. And as he progresses along this path he becomes aware that it is upon his association with such realities that his very existence depends. Attuned to them, he knows an unspeakable peace; alienated from them, he is overcome by a sense of utter helplessness. And if it be suggested that beliefs of this order are the result of "wish-fulfilment", the answer must be that the conditions upon which this inner association with the Real is secured are so severe that it is the strong and not the weak characters among us who are capable of achieving it.

It is simply preposterous to conclude, just because both impressions are "data" for the purely psychological investigator, that, say, a disciplined mystic's registration of a lofty invisible presence is on the same plane as a neurotic's belief that he is unable to move the fingers of his left hand. The experience must be taken in conjunction with the aspirations, disciplines and sacrifices with which it is most intimately associated. Otherwise we are simply skating over the surface of the problem.

At this point all argument would appear to be unprofitable. The reality of the realm of Spirit is a matter of direct experience. It is true that men are capable of limiting and distorting such experience in a thousand different ways as a result of ignorance, superstition

and prejudice. But the fundamental character of the situation remains: there is a Beyond with which, to different degrees, we are all in association. On the character of that association everything that is real in our lives depends, whether we admit the fact or not. And we are taught by the masters of the spiritual life that we are so constituted that we can, if we wish to, deepen and extend our knowledge of this invisible realm of being to the point of becoming finally inwardly free from the limitations of space and time—which is *moksha*, or release.

With the type of thinker who flatly denies that any realities exist except those apprehended through the physical senses we need not pause here to argue. But we have also to consider a much more subtle attack upon the problem: that of the sceptical psychologist who attempts to retain the validity of spiritual experience while assigning it exclusively to the subjective realm.

The position adopted by such thinkers, of which Jung is an outstanding representative, is essentially this: Reality exists in two modes, one of which is apprehended by extraversion, and the other by introversion. That psychic life which is discerned by the second process has its own claims, satisfactions and characteristic structures. By withdrawing within you can enter into a world of psychological life which is just as "real" and important as that which you experience when you look outside yourself at the wonders of the physical universe. Only for Heaven's sake do not make the mistake of concluding that the phenomena which you discover within this Aladdin's cave have necessarily any foundation in extra-mental reality. For then you will be guilty of the unforgivable crime of "projection". The demons, fairies, witches, angels, sacred islands and groves, rites and ceremonies, which you will meet with in such abundance when your inner eyes are opened are merely symbolical in character, representing nothing more substantial than basic modes of psychic activity. But do not make the mistake either of neglecting them just because they do not belong to the same world as that in which the extraverts are so tiresomely active. You have simply become concerned with the other half of the universe, the fascinating, romantic and dangerous "night" life of the introvert. So open the magic casement without any misgivings, and enter confidently into your spiritual heritage!

This attitude is, of course, of great significance, not only because it supplies an important corrective to crudely materialistic conceptions of reality, but on account of its ethical implications. For it scarcely need be pointed out that such a writer as Jung does not simply invite us to disport ourselves at our ease in a psychic playground; he brings our experience in this realm into the closest possible relation with the integration of the personality and its emancipation from infantile and regressive tendencies. Something

more is entailed than a mere luxuriating in subjective experience: a movement forwards towards spiritual wholeness. And, as he never fails to insist, it is achieved only at a considerable cost.

Nevertheless, there are several reasons why this bold and interesting interpretation of our interior experience can scarcely satisfy the critic. I shall deal later with the difficulty raised by the fact that psychology as such can pronounce no judgment upon the metaphysical realities which lie behind the mental images which it is engaged in studying.¹ And we shall see also that it is always safer to assume that psychological states have some sort of extra-mental causation, while in the opposite direction it is by no means easy to explain how the mind can have the capacity of building up a mass of subjective images out of its own interior exuberance.

But all these difficulties are of minor importance in relation to the fundamental weakness of Jung's position, which lies in the fact that in his teachings he appears to preserve the closest philosophical reserve regarding the momentous problem of the persistence of the soul after physical death. It is certainly true that he offers the enterprising introvert the possibility of entering the realm of the "collective unconscious". But this, it must be noted, is very far from amounting to the same thing.

The theory involved will be familiar to the reader. We have, first of all, the "personal unconscious", which consists of all those repressed ideas which relate only to the individual's own existence as a separate entity; its character is determined exclusively by the experiences which he has passed through in the course of his earlier life. Then we have the "collective" unconscious, within which are to be found all those archaic, mythological and primitive images which are inherited by us as part of our racial history.

But although in one sense this initiation into the realm of phylogenic experience signifies expansion and release, the obstinate fact remains that the emancipation which is achieved is of a very partial character. For however rich and full our subjective experience may be, from the point of view of such theories it is merely the inward psychological aspect of a transient biological organism. It is all very well for Jung to assure the middle-aged, life-weary, and disillusioned individual that a real meaning attaches to that inner world of dreams to which he is beginning to turn as his physical energies decline; and that a concern with "religion" is deeply appropriate to the mellow autumn of life. But we cannot do away with the fact that what all men really want to know at heart is whether we continue to exist after the change called death, whether we shall ever again see those to whom we are attached on earth, whether we shall in some future state have to face the consequences

¹ See I, vii, 5 *seq.*

of our earthly failures and reap the reward for our frustrated strivings, whether Heaven and Hell await us after the dissolution of the body.

To inform a person who is drawing near the grave that he should develop the "night life" of the soul may be reasonable enough. But if the whole interior drama which develops as a result will in any case disappear with the extinction of the earthly personality, then all Jung is offering him is the opportunity of enjoying a more complete type of cultural life until the hour of annihilation comes. This may represent a great advance upon a purely sensual type of existence. But it denies to the soul all hope, all ultimate fulfilment. For if the end of the body is the end of our personal consciousness, then whatever transcendental experiences we may enjoy while in physical incarnation, we remain fundamentally at the mercy of the Flux.

2. *As Above, So Below*

Before leaving this question reference must be made to an important element in this psychologizing of experience: the translation of symbols to the biological plane. Once the reality of extra-mental forces in this realm is denied there is no alternative but to consider them as products of the interior activity of the organism. As a result what we were accustomed to regard as our highest realizations necessarily appear, after being subjected to such a process of transmogrification, as expressions of a primitive level of consciousness. What we had formerly naively attributed to Olympus is now shown to have emerged from the primeval slime.

This reduction, or attempted reduction, of experience to more elementary terms derives a great deal of its plausibility from the conclusions of anthropology regarding the savage's relation to the universe. To begin with, the view is uncritically accepted that the peoples which are studied by the investigators in this field are primitive—in the sense that they represent the beginning of a long process of evolution. Actually it is more prudent to assume that, so far from this being the case, they are actually remote and degenerate descendants of races which had a far higher order of civilization, and whose beliefs and customs have therefore been perpetuated by them in the most distorted and fragmentary form—as is indicated by the legends which they preserve in so many cases regarding beings who taught their forefathers the arts of civilization.

In any case, all theorizing in this realm is contingent upon the future discoveries of the archaeologists—not to speak of the *psychic* investigators of the past, whose activities, I suggest, will

have to be taken more and more seriously—so that the whole situation is inherently unstable.

Apart from these considerations, however, we have to reckon with the fact that the savage is represented by the materialistic-minded student of these questions as being in a state of complete delusion with respect to the forces by which he is surrounded. Up to a point this view is doubtless correct, for the research worker in this realm is naturally confronted with a complex of superstitions and degraded beliefs which are really infantile in character. But, as we are today realizing more and more, this provides him with no justification for rejecting out of hand as intrinsically unsound every type of savage belief in an invisible world.¹ For the attitude of practically all anthropologists up to the present has reduced itself to saying in so many words: We modern men of science, whose attitude is still fundamentally materialistic, know very well that there is no objective reality beyond the world of the senses. Hence the savage, who is equally firmly convinced of the opposite, must by definition be in a condition of pathetic illusion about the cosmos. The poor creature actually believes in telepathy, in the existence of disembodied spirits, in healing by spiritual means, and even in the existence of a Great Spirit! Is not all this *prima facie* evidence of delusion?

It is interesting to consider from this point of view the savage's notion of the soul. His conception of its nature has been described adequately enough in a classical passage in Tylor's *Primitive Culture*:

It is a thin, unsubstantial human image, in its nature a sort of vapour, film, or shadow; the cause of life and thought in the individual it animates; independently possessing the personal consciousness and volition of its corporeal owner, past or present; capable of leaving the body far behind, to flash swiftly from place to place; mostly impalpable and invisible, yet also manifesting physical power, and especially appearing to men waking or asleep as a phantasm separate from the body of which it bears the likeness; continuing to exist and appear to men after the death of that body; able to enter into, possess, and act in the bodies of other men, of animals, and even of things.

Are we to conclude that because a modern person entertains such a conception of his psychic being he is guilty of reverting to "primitive" modes of thought? On the contrary one must insist that

¹The evidence produced by the spiritualist Cesare de Vesme in his *Experimental Spiritualism*, Vol. I, *Primitive Man* (trans. Stanley de Brath), is particularly impressive in this connection.

it is precisely such a picture of the soul (or at least of its etheric vehicle) which is being arrived at today by students of psychic science. In every direction they find themselves presented with phenomena which can be intelligibly explained only on the view that within, but detachable from, man's physical body he has another body, interpenetrating it, of a more subtle and plastic type. This body has varying modes of manifestation—the basis of the degenerate belief in a plurality of souls. And it is the element in his constitution which is to a large degree responsible for such manifestations as magnetic healing, telepathy, the appearance of apparitions, a certain order of "dreams" (which are really super-sensible experiences) and in particular that projection of the "double" which has always been practised in esoteric schools, and regarding which a remarkable body of evidence is accumulating in the present era.

It is further to be noted that the doctrine of the "subtle body" has been embraced in the course of history by personalities, both eastern and western, of the most spiritual type. And indeed it is only by postulating the existence of a realm of rarefied matter, of which man's "astral" body is formed, that we can make any sense of all sorts of problems which confront us, not only in the psychological, but also in the philosophical, realm. The "difficulties" met with by the thinker who attempts to explain how man as a spiritual being can be intimately related to physical matter arise very largely through the fact that the notion of etheric substance has, in the West at least, been almost completely lost.

What it comes to is that although the physicists of today have freed themselves to a remarkable degree from the materialistic values of nineteenth-century thought, such values still dominate to a dangerous extent those departments of science which involve research into human behaviour. As a result we find that, paradoxically enough, the thinker who is investigating the most material characteristics of the universe tends to be more "spiritual" in his attitude than his colleague who is investigating the characteristics of the soul. Science is evidently emancipating itself from materialism from the summit downwards; it is the aristocrats of this particular world who form the first converts. Electrons, it would seem, are proving more potent than dreams and visions in convincing the philosophers of the spiritual basis of reality.

But the deeper significance of the anthropologist's attitude lies in its implications for psychology. For his evaluation of the savage is uncritically adopted by the psychologist, who then proceeds to discredit all other manifestations of belief in the Unseen as being of the order of "survivals"—a thoroughly dangerous conception, if ever there was one. Hence, any person who occupies himself with the study of the mystical and occult side of experience at once

becomes deeply suspect; he is accused, in the name of "science", of reverting to a rudimentary type of mental attitude.

Yet, as I say, the more advanced thinkers of the age are at the same time attaining to the point of recognizing that the primitive's conception of an unseen world of spirit, interpenetrating and conditioning that of matter, was far nearer the truth than the materialistic conception of the universe which, until very lately, the men of science had succeeded in imposing upon us.

Provided with this powerful support from the work of his scientific associates, the more unimaginative type of therapist embarks with all the more confidence upon the satisfying undertaking of reducing our spiritual experience to the biological plane. And it is one, naturally, which offers him little difficulty, for the reason that, as is well known, there exists a very close correspondence, rooted in the structure of the universe, between the natural and the transcendental realms.

"As above, so below." The symbols of biology and religion tend formally to have the same superficial character. The mystic, like the earthly lover, seeks union with the Beloved. Fertilization by the Holy Ghost offers the closest parallel to fertilization on the plane of sex. Around the creative fire of Spirit there gather the same collection of images which surround the fire of physical generation. The Father in Heaven is the earthly parent on a more mighty scale. And so on.

The interpretation of these correspondences offers the psychologist little difficulty. Insensitive to all considerations of quality, he confidently concludes that the whole scheme can be adequately explained in the familiar materialistic tradition—from below upwards. His one aim is to prove at every point that Father Christmas is really Daddy. Religious experience becomes a projection of the libido on to the clouds of phantasy.

It is, however, scarcely necessary to point out that all such phenomena can just as legitimately be interpreted from the opposite end. All that is actually observed, one must insist, is a series of analogies. Which factor determines and controls the other it is for the metaphysician and not for the speculative medical man to decide. Whether the idea of a Heavenly Father derives its appeal from the impression made upon us by our terrestrial parent, or whether the latter's qualities reflect on a minute scale those of a Being of infinitely greater stature, so that through him, as it were, we apprehend something of the Creator's majesty—this and similar questions belong entirely to the province of philosophy.

Viewed from the outside only, a passive relapse into the realm of phantasy and an ascent into the region of the Eternal are one and the same. Yet the difference between them is profound. In the first case the spirit is in full retreat before the forces of external

actuality; in the second it has penetrated through the forms of matter into a sphere of being of infinitely greater reality and significance. One process is definitely neurotic; the other implies a transcendence of the plane of *maya*. To the eye of true imagination the world of the visible appears as the objectification in space and time of a supreme Reality which lies beyond them both. And this vision, so far from being the result of a relaxation of tension, is the final outcome of a severe and prolonged process of psychological transmutation; it is attained only after a profound submission to life.

Man is moved by a powerful impulse to create that which is symbolized by the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth. Whence comes his notion of such a possibility? Must not that which serves him as the pattern to which he would make actuality conform be in existence already in some other dimension of being? Can matter evolve out of its own entrails the ideals by which it is to be transformed? Is not the conviction of the poets and seers that this world of ever-changing appearances is not our true home really the result of a discerning insight into truth?

In any case all that psychology knows is that man yearns to enter Nirvana. Where it lies the psychologist is unable to say. He can only treat the desire as a phenomenon, and describe the further phenomena with which it is associated. He has absolutely no idea of where man's soul ultimately comes from. Restricting his vision to the material plane, he observes with Freudian acuteness that the individual's history begins with a period of supposedly blissful peace in the womb.¹ He therefore confidently but unwarrantably concludes that when as an adult he becomes filled with a yearning to enjoy the peace which passeth all understanding, this can only be because external reality has become too much for him, and he is moved to take refuge again in the predifferentiated. In other words, all intimations of immortality are regarded by the materialistic type of intelligence as being on the same level.

And this one simply cannot allow. The psychiatrist, firmly established in the solid, three-dimensional world of the senses, is confronted by a repudiation of the external universe. But although that repudiation may signify in certain cases a neurotic flight from life's demands, it may in others signify that the individual has awakened to a consciousness of a realm of being which lies at the same time both before birth and beyond death, a region from which he was exiled on his first coming to life in the womb, or even

¹ Typical in this connection is the case of Fechner. As mentioned earlier, he was a profound metaphysician who believed that all material forms were animated by Spirit. But the fact that he was for a certain period afflicted by an illness which compelled him to remain in a darkened room has provided a psycho-analyst with the opportunity of "explaining" his whole noble attitude to the universe in terms of a morbid preoccupation with a return to the womb.

long before, and to which he is destined to return one day when he has at last risen above the limitations of matter.

This interpretation, to say the least of it, is as impressive as that advanced by the psychologist. It has behind it the experience of generations of fine and disciplined spirits, and is usually the fruit of a long and determined wrestling with human experience. The resolute thinker who looks life in the face wins through after an arduous struggle to the realization that Reality is to be found on an interior plane of being—even though it remains true that it is our destiny to give expression to it at all costs in the realm of matter. His vision of Heaven is not the result of psychological regression, but of having followed the road of material exploration far beyond the point to which it has been pursued by the man of science.

It is the same with the therapist's conception of the normal sphere of man's activity. He holds out to him, with a "social", Adlerian gesture, the ideal of attaining to "solidarity" with his fellow-men, and of realizing "self-expression" on the biological plane. And this involves a definite repudiation of the insights of religion. For religion has always insisted that man lives in a far more extensive realm than that of the purely biological, and that he can have no inner assurance or serenity until he has established a proper relationship with this wider life.

As a result the comfortable "social" ideals presented to him by the psychologist will not for long satisfy his soul. He will reject the idea of *self-fulfilment* and strive instead for the birth of the "new man" in the realm of spirit. He will deepen his sense of "solidarity" to the point of realizing that in unifying himself with others he is participating in a far wider and more fundamental unity—that unity in God without which no merely social unity can be achieved. And he will be impelled as a result to conduct which may appear as extremely "unrealistic" when regarded from the narrow standpoint of the average psychologist. For he will be driven to make mysterious sacrifices, atonements, and renunciations of the type which have always been demanded by the higher life of the spirit, but which inevitably appear as being wasteful and unproductive from the point of view of a purely biological philosophy. He will conform to a wider pattern than that presented by the material facts alone. And once again it will appear to the clinical eye that he is escaping into the region of phantasy.

3. *The Clinic and the Altar*

Up to this point we have been considering the teachings of the New Psychology chiefly in their more negative aspect, in so far as they bring with them a challenge to our traditional religious ideas.

When we turn to their positive content we meet with a state of affairs which is no less unsatisfactory.

How are the spiritually sick to be made whole? There is first of all the possibility of clinical treatment; and one has no desire to minimize its achievements. But the fact remains that "analysis" is not only painful, expensive and artificial, but in the case of the more highly developed individual it may lead to positive damage in the hands of all but the most inspired practitioner. At the best it must be regarded as a surgical alternative to more natural and organic methods of restoration. And to the value of such methods the psychiatrist tends, as a natural result of his technical training, to do insufficient justice.

It is plain that there are all sorts of agencies at work in breaking down psychological resistances besides that of "psychology". There is the inspiring influence of Nature. There is the effect on the mind of sane, realistic, penetrating philosophy. There is the powerful influence of the finest art, a factor of the utmost importance in liberating the "unconscious". There is, again, the action exercised upon us by developed personalities, which are perpetually challenging, stimulating and releasing the deeper reality in those with whom they come into contact. And finally there are the great traditional influences of religion at its best, which embody the most potent processes of "suggestion", piercing to the very deepest levels of the consciousness and breaking up our complexes at their source—however much this possibility may be denied by technical theory.

But our modern psychologists usually not only fail to show a due appreciation of these factors; they also by their materialistic interpretations largely deprive us of the possibility of making use of them. In his strivings to integrate his personality the religious individual normally derives enormous assistance from such practices as prayer, mystical contemplation, rites and ceremonies, communion with the Supreme. In the light of these modern teachings, however, such ideas tend to be interpreted as expressions of a retreat into the sphere of phantasy. And in their place the person is offered a collection of humanitarian ideals of very limited efficacy. Sometimes, indeed, he is left with nothing more than an exhortation to accept with due philosophical resignation the spiritual wasteland which remains when analysis has completed its devastating work.

But the really serious limitation in the psychologist's methods appears only when it is a question, not of bringing the disoriented individual back to the sphere of "normality", but of lifting the personality to a still higher plane. It is impossible to believe that in therapeutic treatment we are provided with a means of transforming our unregenerate natures at the root. The truth would

seem to be, rather, that the mental physician can do little more than assist the individual in bringing the conflicting forces in his nature into a fair condition of equilibrium. He can disembarrass, but he cannot elevate. He may be able to let us out of Hell, but he cannot place in our hands the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven. Admittedly, he is very often able to liberate the personality from its bondage. If that personality is of a noble type the result will be a great release of life and power. If, on the contrary, it is of a more commonplace cast the consequences will be less remarkable. But in neither case does the therapist do anything much in spiritualizing the deeper levels of the soul. There is no radical process of regeneration involved. The patient may be "cured" but the "new man" has not been born within him.

The most one can say is that the treatment has made the person "himself" again. He "returns to work", freed from his neurotic disabilities. In certain cases he may, of course, owe to the psychologist the release of remarkable powers. But generally speaking it would seem that, as one would expect, his physician has not been able to raise him above the plane on which he himself, the psychiatrist, was already established.

And with this fact we are brought face to face with a situation of the deepest significance for the spiritual life of the present generation. As a result of the advance of science in this field our modern psychological doctors have in a large measure taken over the function once performed by the priesthood. The clinic replaces the discredited confessional. The work of the therapist is that of giving spiritual advice, in particular to the afflicted, and more widely to all those who are disturbed regarding the more searching problems entailed in adjustment to Reality.

It is impossible to avoid the conclusion that the deeper the level on which the physician attacks the problem of disease, the greater the obligation upon him to submit to the disciplines imposed upon the priest. While it is still a question of treating the body in a purely external and mechanical fashion, the qualities demanded of the practitioner are in no way remarkable; in order to dress a wound one does not need to have undertaken the ascent of Mount Carmel, nor does one need to have entered the deeper trance states in order to give an injection effectively. And up to a point one can even act as a psychological adviser without having gone very far in transmuting one's personality. It is still a question primarily of kindness, human insight and common sense.

At length, however, a stage is reached at which the problem assumes a definitely spiritual character; nothing positive is achieved unless the therapist has made himself into an instrument for forces of a far higher type than those which an ordinary healer attempts to express. It is a question, in fact, of exercising the

gifts of the Spirit. Otherwise there will be no true flow of power, no manifestation of that deeper love by which alone darkness can be overcome, and above all no understanding of those Mysteries which provide the key to true spiritual direction.

Activity on this level, however, demands all sorts of adaptations and sacrifices which but few are prepared to undertake. To begin with, there is involved a severe measure of austerity, particularly in relation to worldly success. How many psychologists today, for example, have reached the point of submitting to an honest analysis the mass of questionable assumptions and associations that are built up round the notion of "professional status", and which have their roots in the very structure of a materialistic type of society?

No less deep is the entanglement with that "scientific" attitude to experience which, as I have tried to indicate earlier, expresses an unconscious impulse to deal with human problems in unduly easy terms. We may safely assume that the psychotherapy of the future will involve a far higher degree of art and mystical inspiration. It will be practised by people who in every direction are approaching the whole undertaking from a spiritual standpoint, with all that this implies. The fact will be fully recognized that what is involved is essentially a priestly function, and that no man can be a true priest while he still in large measure accepts the values of those to whom he is attempting to minister.

We have to remember also that the function of the priest as ordinarily understood is not by any means limited to disentangling the psychological difficulties of his flock. It is his office also to give them spiritual sustenance and inspiration, to bring them into an atmosphere of transcendental power from which they can derive invigoration, calm and assurance in their struggles with life. But this is an activity for which very special capacities are required. The spiritual director must be a far more completely integrated personality than the run of men; his life must in the most serious sense of the term be *dedicated*; he must maintain an inner communion with planes of being which are inaccessible to those who do not undertake the disciplines and purifications which are essential for becoming a true instrument of the Light. The truly potent forces are those which have been liberated by an order of devotion, aspiration and sacrifice which makes the most searching demands upon the individual. We are in a realm in which kindness and intelligence alone can take us only a certain way along the road.

Can the modern psychologist provide us with any assistance in this field? It is doubtful. The confessional without the altar is a formula which is adequate only for the lesser problems of the spiritual life. On its positive side the contribution of the therapist is notoriously weak. For although he may be an expert technician,

and a kind and sympathetic personality as well, he has not devoted himself to the grave undertaking of becoming a sanctified instrument of the Spirit. He may be wise and good, but he is not *holy*. He does not deliberately seek an influx of purifying and transforming transcendental power from the Within. This for the sufficient reason that even if he were impelled to do so, his own ideology would inevitably make for a paralysing disbelief in such agencies. That is the formidable price which he has paid for acquiring his scientific technique.

But can we without making this critical step forward really hope to achieve potent results in the sphere of spiritual direction? Would the therapist be able to compete with men and women who, while being technically expert, were also living the life of the spirit in the most serious and devoted sense? Could they draw the same power from within as those who identified themselves deeply with the great creative forces of life? Surely not. We must conclude, rather, that at a certain distance along the road science is brought to a halt, and can make no further progress until it accepts the validity of categories which derive from the very order of thought which it originally set out to overthrow. Without accepting the great Invisible the situation cannot be raised above a certain plane of manifestation. If man is really made in the divine image only those who look for the key to reality in the Supreme can hope to understand his deeper nature.

4. *Soul and Spirit*

What, then, is the true relationship between religious influence and psychological treatment or training? It is clear in the first place that by a psychological technique a person can be released from prejudices and antagonisms which prevent him from becoming receptive to spiritual inspiration. On the other hand, the effect of powerful spiritual experience will be to dissolve and dissipate at their root fixations and resistances on which a purely psychological technique has little or no effect. The obvious conclusion, therefore, is that the two modes of releasing the personality should be employed in conjunction. And this is surely wise.

As to the relation subsisting between them, there is of course no question of religion becoming a *substitute* for psychology. One may suggest that it is its function, by calling into operation various types of transcendental forces, to create round the individual, as it were, a zone of spiritual power within which *all* the processes in his being, physical, psychic and mental, become properly regulated. That is to say, through the intensive presence of the Spirit within, and of association with the wider invisible universe, all the different

rhythms in his being become harmonized and co-ordinated; the body becomes whole, the character strengthened, the mind clear and—the esotericist would add—the course of the so-called “external events” in the life more ordered and constructive. Naturally, the resulting emphasis will depend upon the particular type of spiritual force which has been invoked, but the general principle involved is that the inner, primary conditions which have been established determine the external and secondary conditions which constitute the psychology and circumstances of the subject. For the key is ever in the Within.

It will thus be seen that a religious environment is perfectly compatible with psychological education. It simply works out that in a genuinely religious sphere the individual should be able to solve all his problems, either alone or with assistance, more surely, easily and rapidly than he would otherwise.

And here we have to consider the fact—with which we shall be occupied in the next chapter—that concern with the transcendental, properly understood, implies the understanding and control of various supraphysical forces, the operation of which constitutes the real cause of many of our psychological states. We cannot afford to neglect the possibility that the overwhelming majority of the ills which afflict humanity today—ranging from insanity, crime, and alcoholism at one end of the scale down to invalidism and minor mental and nervous disturbances at the other—have their origin in obsessive influences from other planes of being. If this view is correct—and it is an interesting fact that very great emphasis is laid upon it in communications from the other side—then it will follow that both the attempts of physicians to treat these afflictions in physical terms and those of psychologists to deal with them in terms of the “subjective” state of the patient fail completely to get to the root of the trouble. The only radical way to attack the problem is to develop a technique for dispelling the undesirable psychic influences round the sufferer, when his symptoms will automatically disappear.¹

It must further be considered that such cases represent only more extreme manifestations of a condition to which we are all in some measure subject; in one form or another psychic influences are upon us of the nature of which we have no realization. Nor do even the practices and devotions of even enlightened religion serve altogether to dispel them. There is no way whereby we can

¹ Of great interest in this connection is the work of Dr. Carl A. Wickland, M.D., with his wife, who was a trance medium. As recorded in his *Thirty Years Among the Dead* (Los Angeles, 1924), discarnate spirits who had been obsessing individuals on earth were induced (by spirit agency) to speak through his wife's body. And it is a remarkable fact that while doing so they exhibited exactly the same symptoms as did the person whom they had been obsessing. Dr. Wickland persuaded them to leave their victims (usually by the application of static electricity to the patient's body), who rapidly recovered—in some cases without having had any direct contact with him or even having heard of his existence.

evade the obligation of acquiring a due knowledge of the forces at work in the wider universe.

Turning now to the positive side of the question, one must certainly recognize that, as already noted above, psychological education and discipline can play an important part in determining the individual's capacity to respond to spiritual realities. Hence the weight which has always been laid upon them in all authentic schools of spiritual wisdom. But it is also true that mere technique, whether in the form of self-education or of education by others, can do no more than place the individual in a position to take free advantage of whatever spiritual influences happen to be available to him. And if such influences are not of great potency he will unquestionably not get as far as do less disciplined people who are in a more vital zone of transcendental power.

Of course if both factors are present the doors are opened to exceptional possibilities. But it is usually a case of strength in one direction at the expense of weakness in the other. Thus it is not to be denied that by psychotherapy alone a person may be brought back to a healthy condition of mind. But his motive for submitting to treatment is usually the very natural one of obtaining relief from an intolerable condition of affliction. And just because there is no higher element involved there is no influx into the being of those more mystical regenerative forces which transform the soul in the deeper spiritual sense. As long as the personality is merely regarded as an organism which needs adjustment for the sake of the individual's own peace of mind the transformation cannot be carried above a certain plane. For "liberation" in a more ultimate sense there is demanded exposure to spiritual influences of a more powerful order than those available in the clinic.

And this is where religion comes into play. Until the person comes into association with an order of life relative to which earthly fulfilments and satisfactions are as nothing; until he is made conscious of the manifestation of such qualities as purity, peace, equilibrium, mercy, adoration and renunciation, in a far higher mode than that in which they are manifested in the ordinary life around him; and until, further, they act upon him with a force far greater than that possessed by purely aesthetic or intellectual manifestations of such powers—he cannot be said to be really on the path of spiritual redemption.

And such influences are provided in their full power only by a true and enlightened form of belief. For the justification of religion lies in its capacity to release and quicken spiritual forces that cannot be set in motion by even the most intelligent manipulation of an individual's psychological organism. And this power, again, is derived from the fact that religion brings the individual in touch

with a higher, a more intense, and an eternal order of life. True, the well-spring of that life is within each of us. But it cannot normally be drawn upon unless the person places himself within some sphere in which it is concentrated and maintained.

We have already seen that in some directions the individual's capacity to receive this celestial infusion does depend upon the degree of psychological adjustment which he has achieved. But just because the level on which true spiritual forces operate is so deep-seated, it follows that his conscious condition of mind may have surprisingly little effect upon their working within him. There must, of course, be a fundamental receptivity. But given that it exists, the action upon the soul may be largely unperceived by the subject—although, needless to say, its final outworkings must be in terms of psychology. In a word, religious influences, like those of art or human association, work directly upon the subconscious—on the real man. But they work, the mystic believes, on a deeper level than do any others for the reason that—to state the essence of the matter—true forms of religious ritual and practice bring us into a more direct association with the realm of transcendental life than can any other.

But their action is often very slow—just because it is really radical. In fact the more "dramatic" the changes effected, the less likely it is that the deeper sources of regenerative life have been drawn upon. One finds, therefore, that for a time the more superficial results of a true redemptive process are less satisfying than those resulting from expert psychological treatment. All sorts of inhibitions, conflicts and neuroticisms may still remain largely unaffected. But the man is slowly being changed at the roots, and reveals to the discerning eye the first development of qualities which no "treatment" could promote. This because he has been inwardly brought into touch with realms of life and light and power through an attunement to the deeper forces of the universe.

Of course, if in a given instance psychological treatment proves to be more powerful than religious influences, this simply constitutes a reflection upon that particular form of religion. And since the great majority of religious bodies today have, for different reasons, become cut off from the sources of true spiritual power, it does actually work out that it is psychology which in many directions has the more successful record. And, of course, such a situation makes for an excusable doubt in the spectator regarding the claims of religion to transform life. But I would nevertheless insist on the fact that any religious activity which is based on spiritual realities, and not on their memory or their perversion, must prove more powerful in releasing the personality than any other known agency. The matter, naturally, is one regarding which it is not

profitable to argue. But one may hazard the prophecy that time is on the side of those who are taking their stand on this assumption.

CHAPTER SEVEN

SCIENCE AND THE BEYOND

IN the previous chapter we were concerned with the scientist's relation to the Unseen as it affected his activity as a therapist. We must now examine his attitude to the general problem of psychic research. This will, of course, again involve us with psychology, but this time from a different standpoint.

1. *The Problem of Evidence*

If science approaches the study of the "supernormal" in a spirit of extreme scepticism the attitude is surely excusable enough. For its triumphs have been secured in large measure as the result of a prolonged and tenacious struggle with superstition and prejudice, primitive, mediaeval and contemporary. The scientist's opposition to the extension of research to this field has been reinforced by the fact that all sorts of events which were formerly attributed to "magical" causes are now adequately explained in terms of the operation of purely physical forces. Further, he cannot but be conscious of the fact that the majority of those people who are most responsive to such influences from the Within lack just that logicity and sense of the objective on which his own researches have led him to set so high a price. Hence it is only natural that he should have very serious reservations in his mind whenever he is confronted with phenomena of this order.

Yet there is no less evidently another side to the picture. First of all, it is impossible any longer to shut one's eyes to the fact that the events which are taking place in this strange field are challenging our attention ever more insistently with every year that passes. However bewildering the situation may be to the uninitiated, it cannot be denied that the reality of the Ambient, of a vast unexplored realm of supersensible life and force, is something with which we are now obliged to reckon in the most serious sense. In view of the vast mass of carefully scrutinized evidence which has now been accumulated by psychic investigators both in the scientific and the spiritistic field, any further attempt to pretend that our

experience of reality is confined to the physical aspects of the universe amounts only to an evasion of the problem.

Further, it cannot be denied that research in this realm enormously outweighs in importance any which is undertaken in other spheres, and this for the reason that it brings us to the threshold of an order of knowledge by which we could extend our control over nature and our own lives to an incalculable degree. We become engaged with powerful forces even a small command over which would render our traditional methods of dealing with our problems entirely out of date. All this quite apart from the great interest which these developments present from the scientific point of view.¹

Yet in spite of all these considerations the standpoint adopted by the average man of science towards these questions remains extremely disappointing. Although a small minority have from the beginning performed a valuable work in opening up this important field, the majority treat such investigations with curious indifference. In fact, it is not too much to say that their attitude to this momentarily important question amounts almost to a conspiracy: in the face of the discoveries which are being made in this realm they manifest a scepticism which goes far beyond that which they display in respect to other aspects of knowledge. They simply—following in this matter the ignoble example of Huxley—do not want to admit that there exists a sphere of being in which the laws and principles of accepted science no longer apply, which is registered by faculties which they do not possess themselves, and which are developed by a discipline which they only imperfectly understand.

Naturally that little band of scientists referred to above who are seeking to come to grips with the subject have gone much farther and done a great deal of valuable work. Yet even they are seriously limited by a very definite bias which they have acquired in the course of their technical training. My aim in what follows is to indicate how this works out.

First of all there is to be considered the attitude of the professional psychic investigator to the evidence available to us in

¹ "A knighthood would, no doubt, be considered the appropriate reward for a man who discovered a new world on the outskirts of the solar system. 'Forty shillings or a week' is the correct recognition for the mediums whose peculiar gifts help to establish the probability of another world, far more important in its general consequences to mankind than any world in the solar system. If we were rational, we should refuse to leave open this great question of immortality. We should insist on the Government continuing to subsidize Psychical Research until we had satisfied ourselves beyond all reasonable doubt that the great riddle was insoluble, and Psychical Research was doomed to sterility. . . . Again the very existence of the Churches is bound up with the belief in immortality. It would be idle to protest that the arguments advanced by the Churches in support of that belief compel acquiescence. Nobody will deny that the Churches would regain much of their old power and much of their old influence if the belief in immortality could be scientifically demonstrated. But it is easy to imagine the protests which would follow if a bishop appealed for funds for Psychical Research." (Arnold Lunn, *The Flight From Reason* (1931), p. 190.)

this field. His tendency, we find, is to restrict the range of admissible testimony to an inordinate extent. His ideal, of course, is the "controlled experiment" in which, through the resourceful employment of every manner of technical device, the "subjective" element in the proceedings can be eliminated to the maximum degree. And what is not ascertained under such rigorous conditions appears to him to possess little significance. The following remarks by Mr. Harry Price, a former President of the S.P.R., and Honorary Secretary of the University of London Council for Psychical Investigation, are here worthy of note:

Not a single case of materialization, levitation, ectoplasm or teleplasm, telekinesis, apport phenomena, transfiguration, spirit lights, psychic breezes, spirit photographs and paintings, slate-writing, voice or trumpet phenomena, spirit writing, ghosts, spirits, hauntings, or Poltergeists, has been observed under conditions that would satisfy orthodox Science. Consequently, orthodox Science does not believe in them.¹

But surely men of science are not all so indiscriminating! For it should be plain that in this field we have to do with different orders of testimony, each of which has its legitimate claims upon us. Thus, in addition to the unassailable laboratory evidence referred to above, we have material of a different type, none of it accumulated under test conditions, but nevertheless collected and sifted with great care by such men as Myers and Gurney, and so extensive that it fills scores of volumes.

To affirm that because such evidence is not on the same level as that obtained in the laboratory one must suspend one's judgment regarding it is scarcely reasonable. For to begin with its very voluminousness is a fact which cannot be dismissed. That which is reported consistently from every quarter of the earth, which occurs both to the educated and the uneducated amongst all races and peoples, which has persisted throughout the centuries, and which bears the same general features wherever it may be met with, cannot be chimerical in character. We are here confronted with a great basic element in human experience in the face of which scepticism only reveals its superficiality.

In seeking to dismiss such facts on the grounds that they have not been demonstrated under "controlled conditions" the man of science is resorting to the questionable device of measuring them by standards which are really appropriate to another field of research. In other words, this type of evidence is pretty much in the same category as that collected by the anthropologists and the sociologists, and should be evaluated according to the same

¹ *Fifty Years of Psychic Research* (1939), pp. 289-90.

principles. It is a question of securing reliable information regarding a mass of spontaneous happenings all over the place which in the vast majority of cases neither occur under controlled conditions nor can be subjected to them. The work of the laboratory investigator is to give such knowledge—to the very small degree that this is possible at all—a more precise character. But whether so refined or not, it exists; and this is for us the really significant point. Fact in this particular province is more momentous than subsequent precise measurement. Apparitions, telepathy, materializations, mediumistic displays, prophetic intimations—all these things signify that we are in touch with a great invisible world of life, and it is *this* that challenges our previous assumptions and opens the door to a whole new conception of the universe.

All this applies to psychic phenomena as they are presented to us at second-hand. But we have also to reckon with a situation of a far more significant order—that which is directly and dramatically presented to the individual himself.

To the neutral observer the records of people's transactions with the Unseen are just so much material which may or may not present interesting features or appear convincing. To the person, on the contrary, who has had an immediate contact with the invisible world of being what is involved is not simply an event, but an *experience*. Wait until it happens to *you*! The fact is surely significant that even a minor psychic adventure which really goes home outweighs completely all the "evidence" which the person has been so calmly and self-possessedly studying at second-hand. A thousand reported cases leave the sceptic unmoved; one minor but indisputable invasion of his private territory by unseen influences, and his whole equilibrium is disturbed. He remains incredulous and unconvinced—until some manifestation occurs which affects his more intimate personal life; and then his whole attitude to the problem changes overnight. As everyone knows, this is true in thousands of cases and applies as completely to educated as to uneducated persons. And the attitude involved is reasonable enough. For the startling immediacy which characterizes such experiences and their profoundly disturbing effects afford a powerful presumption in favour of the fact that one has had transactions with something outside one's own skin. The burden of proof is really on the other person who as a detached spectator tries to explain the whole thing away. And remember that we have already agreed (I hope) that describing the experience as "subjective" proves nothing in either direction.

On a deeper level the significance of such events lies in the challenge which they bring to the individual's subconscious assumptions. For however fluently he may have indulged previously in merely intellectual speculations regarding the manifold dimensions

of space, until the experience occurred he had unreflectingly identified actuality with the world of the senses. And a glimpse into a sphere of non-physical being naturally has the effect of gravely disturbing his basic assumptions.

In other words, immediate supernormal experience has usually a far more powerful and enduring effect upon the soul than that which reaches it through the physical senses. A vision, a subjective admonition, an encounter with an entity upon the spiritual planes, produce a peculiarly dramatic and haunting impression upon the mind which is not readily forgotten. For we are here concerned with a strange realm of being in which the interior and the exterior life are more intimately associated than is the case in our familiar world of sense-awareness, that world in which objective and subjective are sundered to the maximum degree. In other words, on the more interior levels of consciousness experience is markedly personalized, identification with the object more complete, and the emotional element, therefore, the more pronounced. The soul is more accessible on its own plane than it is through the resistant medium of the body.

Psychic perception is from one point of view much inferior to that achieved by the artist; this we must recognize. Yet however unpretentious the achievement involved, it does signify unquestionably at least a preliminary emancipation from our bondage to the physical body. The Invisible carries with it always a challenge and a threat. Unless he is completely immersed in the life of the senses man cannot accept with real equanimity the unremitting influence upon him, waking and sleeping, of an intangible, but closely present, realm of transcendental being. We find, therefore, that the man of powerful physical perceptions usually betrays a marked uneasiness in the face of all supernormal phenomena. He is unconsciously so deeply identified with his body that all experience of the Beyond fills him with uncertainty and fear.

Nor does the development of a high culture altogether serve to remove this disquietude. For the individual's superior awareness is undertaken, after all, from the standpoint of his location within a physical body which is ultimately destined to dissolution. His "values" may be most elevated. But what of the soul for which they exist? High intuitions respecting man's immortality, philosophic conclusions pointing in the same direction, the light of Eternity as radiant within the appearances of space and time—these realizations, radical as they may be, are yet in most cases less powerful than are direct psychic experience in awakening the soul out of its earthly dream.

The fact that true cognition is only possible in this field when feeling is aroused finds expression, of course, in many other directions as well. We shall see later that emotional intensity is an

essential condition for the performance of those "magical" operations which are so seriously misunderstood by the rationalistic thinker. Only when the realization has been reached that Reality is essentially personal in character do all these difficulties disappear.

With all this, however, we have not yet finished with the question of evidence. For we find that the scientific expert, besides endeavouring to limit unduly the range of the admissible testimony, proceeds also on the assumption that if science can throw no light on these particular problems there is nothing more to be said. He admits, if he is intelligent, that "supranormal" phenomena cannot be dismissed; but we have simply no idea as to how or why they take place. In his view the explanations for such happenings which are advanced by spiritualists and students of the occult are merely speculative and take us far beyond what the evidence entitles us to conclude.

But this attitude cannot but leave one deeply unsatisfied. The view cannot be accepted that beyond the restricted frontiers of science there is no valid knowledge which we can bring to bear upon the problem. The truth of the matter is that by displaying a notable insensitiveness to its more refined aspects the technical investigator can plausibly represent himself as possessing an integrity, cautiousness and sobriety in which other observers are deficient. Such thinkers begin by limiting their experience of the universe to an extreme degree—and then blandly assure us that outside this limited field all remains uncomprehensible and mysterious.

If, however, psychic phenomena appear in such a bewildering light it is surely only because they have been arbitrarily detached from all our other contacts with the great world of the Unseen. They have their place in a wider and more spiritual scheme on which the man of science has disastrously turned his back. And that scheme discloses itself to us—and in no unmistakable fashion—when we bring to bear upon psychic problems, not only our technical scientific scrutiny, but also our deeper intuitions, our imaginative and inspirational realizations, and the fruits of our deeper philosophical reflection.

Take, for instance, the problem of survival. If we regard the evidence available in this field as consisting only of scraps of information about a realm of existence of which we know practically nothing—then we shall naturally develop our speculations regarding it with complete freedom, within, as it were, an ideological vacuum. No one hypothesis will appear to us as being inherently more likely to be true than another. We shall study the facts before us much as we might study some curious pebble brought by a traveller from a remote and uncharted region of the earth. And we shall arrive at no very illuminating conclusions regarding it.

If, however, we have already reached weighty reasons for believing in the immortality of the soul; if we have also accustomed our minds to the notion that matter can exist in more refined forms than that perceived through the physical senses; and if, further, we have developed our intuitive faculties so that we can recognize truth directly without being unduly dependent upon the inspection of external evidence—then we may really be said to be in a position to see the problem in a proper perspective. The “scepticism” of the purely technical investigator will then appear in its true light as the natural consequence of approaching the subject in an insufficient state of spiritual preparation.

The following remarks made by Dr. C. E. M. Joad in the course of investigating the astonishing phenomena at Borley Rectory will illustrate my point:

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As so frequently occurs when one is investigating so-called abnormal phenomena, one finds it equally impossible to withhold credence from the facts or to credit any possible explanation of the facts. Either the facts did not occur, or, if they did, the universe must in some important respects be totally other than what one is accustomed to suppose.

Is it unreasonable to suggest that Dr. Joad first of all, through the disregard of certain important aspects of knowledge to which one would expect an imaginative mind normally to be responsive, limits his conception of the universe to an extreme degree, and then complains that he is confronted with all sorts of manifestations which are completely unintelligible to him? But one must insist that they are *not* equally unintelligible to other investigators of the Unseen who have developed their intuitive and inspirational faculties and have attained as a result to at least a preliminary insight into these deeper laws of life.

2. The Penalty for Precision

That purely technical enquiry cannot take us very far in this field is surely comprehensible enough. For we cannot get away from the fact that there is a fundamental incongruity between the methods of science and the material offered us by our contacts with the Unseen. The region into which it is now carrying its researches is profoundly different in character from that in which it is naturally at home. Instead of being objective (as is Nature as conceived of for the purposes of scientific study) it is subjective-objective in structure. And this means—a point to which I shall return later—that the investigator will never make any real progress in understanding it unless he is prepared, not only to modify his philosophical

assumptions in the most radical fashion, but also to unfold and educate his emotional nature.

This adaptation, however, the man of science is deeply disinclined to undertake. He demands, quite unreasonably, that he shall be allowed to deal with such phenomena as if they were taking place under "normal" conditions—that is to say, in conditions in which their nature is not determined by the state of mind of those who are shaping or observing them. He seeks persistently to reduce the supraphysical to a conventional scientific situation. His object is to accommodate our experience of this strange region within that system of more obvious and easily controlled relationships which we have established in building up our picture of the natural world. As a result he fails always to touch the heart of the problem. Having no knowledge of the invisible realm from within, he arbitrarily lays down the conditions on which *he* would prefer to conduct any given experiment, regarding those insisted upon by people who are really familiar with this particular field of experience—especially if they exist "on the other side"—as obstructions introduced into the proceedings with the object of preventing the discovery of truth. If it is suggested, for instance, that certain psychic phenomena can take place only in a subdued light, he interprets this to mean, not that he is involved with conditions with which he is unfamiliar, but that he is confronted with a sinister conspiracy to frustrate the august purposes of science.

The result can only be sterility. The investigator may indeed succeed in establishing a small number of carefully tested facts, but there is no creative principle at work to carry him forward beyond this stage of knowledge. The contrast afforded with the development of other branches of scientific research, in which new vistas have opened out before us decade by decade to a positively astounding degree, is too striking to escape notice. And it has not failed to arrest the attention of Mr. Price. Writing in 1939, he observed with respect to the S.P.R.:

The Society has reached no conclusions after all these years (i.e. since 1882) and after issuing scores of volumes and publications. The questions of telepathy, clairvoyance, trance, dreams, etc., and the various phases of psychical phenomena are still unsettled so far as the S.P.R., in its official capacity, is concerned. Of course, some of its Council, and many of its members, are convinced of survival, and of the genuineness of some of the phenomena of the seance room.¹

We shall see later that the enquiries of Professor Rhine in the field of E.S.P. have had the same abortive results.

¹*Fifty Years of Psychic Research*, pp. 61-2.

The reason for this lack of progress is not far to seek. To begin with, it lies in the nature of the case that it is only the periphery of transcendental experience which can be subjected to treatment on ordinary scientific lines. For there are all sorts of important supernormal manifestations to be taken account of, the reality of which can never be decisively proved materially one way or the other. Thus on the most interior level of existence the individual's response to invisible, but very real, influences which are being exerted upon him from the Unseen may be purely spiritual and emotional in character. He will enter into mystical states in which he becomes aware of the quality of various realms of being, and the effect on his soul may be extremely powerful. But although true knowledge is imparted to him, it cannot be formulated in terms of ordinary conceptions and no definite imagery is involved; he simply feels himself to be within a certain sphere of transcendental life.

Further, even if he does become clairvoyant or clairaudient on this plane, it is impossible to "prove" that his vision is genuine. For it will be evident that a seer can have the most extensive contact with other worlds of life and derive the most valuable spiritual illumination therefrom, without his experiences in this field having any direct or verifiable connection with happenings in the world of ordinary life. In fact, as already suggested, it is just the least significant of such revelations which are "evidential" in the cruder sense of the term. A student of these questions can undertake the most extensive travels in the unseen realms and yet be concerned with very few phenomena which can be brought into an immediate relation with physical events. It is a question, rather, of exploring another world of being which touches this world only at certain points.

Another consideration of importance is that contact with the Unseen is most characteristically expressed in terms of personal guidance: it is indicated to the individual by some transcendental means or other—a vision, a dream, a symbol, an interior voice—what he or she should do. But this brings us into the field of history, and we have already seen earlier that science, which deals only with classes of events, is excluded by its methods and scope from penetrating the realm of the personal. Further, in respect of such problems it is in any case almost impossible to produce any facts which "prove" that such guidance is correct. For response to a true intimation might result simply in something like a quiet, outwardly uneventful life, or in preservation from danger without one's realizing the fact at all, or in a succession of events which appear outwardly to involve no chain of causation. In other words, the evidence for association with the Unseen in this field will be recognized and admitted only by those whose values are already spiritual.

3. *Faith and Vision*

But more important is the fact that, as I have already suggested, we are now in a realm in which experience is personalized. And this must affect the whole conduct of any investigations which are made into its character. For the situation is no longer to be dealt with in the ordinary scientific mode *from the outside*. On the contrary it must now be considered *from the inside* in terms of a subtly balanced combination of observation and sympathy.

Our higher experience is organic. No real advances can be made in this field until the fundamental principle is accepted that emotional states and reactions are fundamental elements in the complex with which we are presented in this field. The type of facts which arouse the curiosity of the scientist appear in indissoluble association with others in which he is not "interested", or which positively impede his researches. The possibilities of acquiring scientific knowledge in this field are strictly limited—and by something very much deeper than science itself.

It lies in the very nature of such phenomena that they must appear in an unscientific setting. Thus, as already remarked, we have to reckon with the obstinate fact that transactions with the Unseen take place most readily in an atmosphere of sympathy and *rapprochement* which has the unfortunate effect of blurring the clear outlines of the scientific picture. This is a law of life which science with all its resourcefulness will never be able to circumvent. One may safely affirm that mere curiosity regarding the Invisible on the part of people who are spiritually unawakened, and who cherish the delusion that command over this inner realm is to be secured by nothing more fundamental than impersonal research into its laws in accordance with accepted scientific principles, can never lead to more than a barely external, and largely deceptive, acquaintance with its nature.

The object of science and the law is to establish evidence which is compulsory even for the individual who has no respect for a person's honour, or trust in his faculties: whatever you may say or think, there is the bloodstained handkerchief, the incriminating wisp of hair, the fingerprint record. In the same way psychic research begins invariably by deliberately insulting the medium. "No sooner had Dr. Hodgson assumed charge of her case than he put several private detectives to work." We must assume that he or she is a liar and a trickster until, having brought into action our apparatus of cords, photographs and electrical devices, we are forced to concede that "genuine phenomena" are involved. In other words, the method assumes that we must reduce the situation to the very lowest terms and that there is no question of our

knowledge of truth in this field being a function of that higher knowledge by virtue of which we recognize goodness and integrity when we see it. The same technique of detached scrutiny is applied to an earthworm and a spiritual personality; in dealing with the problem the scientist officially recognizes only objective material evidence.

But the approach is fundamentally inappropriate. Quite simply, more spiritual qualities are required for the enterprise. Vexatious as it may be to the technical investigator, one must insist on the fact that the nature of the hidden and more creative life of the universe is revealed only to those who have unfolded also capacities of a widely different type. For it will be found by those who pursue their researches in this field with sufficient persistence that at a certain point such elements as sympathy, aspiration, purification, dedication and mystical imagination are essential for the success of the experiment.

We cannot in this realm afford to disregard the profound principle that "unto every one that hath shall be given . . . but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he seemeth to have". In other words, the purely scientific student of the supernormal will find increasing justification for his scepticism. Determined to accept no evidence in this field unless he is positively compelled to do so, he will reach only the most meagre and unilluminating conclusions. The person, however, who is able to deal with the phenomena, not only critically, but also imaginatively, will be led on inevitably to ever deeper and more significant disclosures. Of course excessive credulity is disastrous. But the principle holds that whenever it is a question of moving inwards from the realm of matter into that of spirit it is better to believe too much than too little. The key is Faith. For the basis of faith is ultimately true subjective knowledge which has not yet been translated into full consciousness.

And not only this, it will even appear that in the light of a deeper order of realization the individual no longer thinks in terms of "phenomena", "experiments" and "research", and that even the "curiosity" of the man of science begins in this region to lose its sacrosanct character. For we enter a sphere in which intellectual processes are illuminating only in so far as they are subject to the higher operations of the spirit—or in simpler language, a sphere in which you have to love in order to know.

The important, the revealing truths are communicated, not only in the purely psychic, but also in the ordinary human, realm when certain spiritual experiences have unlocked the chamber of the heart. They are imparted in places which are reached only after a long and exhausting spiritual pilgrimage. Or they are uttered under the solemn influence of mystical rituals at which only the believing

may be present, and to which only the believing will respond. With respect to all the more important "phenomena" it may be safely affirmed that the presence of a hostile, or even of a sceptical, observer will prevent or limit their appearance. This is just as definite a scientific fact as any others which are involved in the situation. *Rapport* is no less a reality than gravity, osmosis or crystallization. Attempt to disregard it, and you simply fail to get certain results—just as you would fail in another field if you disregarded atmospheric pressure. The circumstance may be embarrassing to the man of science, but all one can say is that the universe appears to be constituted in this fashion.

There is no help for it. With all sympathy for the complaints of the conscientious "trained investigator" one must insist on the fact that experience is a whole. Events appear always as elements in a complex. And, as philosophers like Whitehead are impressing upon us more and more strongly, they have no real existence outside it. Hence, while you are violating no deep unity by isolating, say, an acid for observation in the laboratory, you cannot with impunity subject a higher order of phenomenon to the same treatment.

The truth of the matter is that the most remarkable super-physical phenomena, and those which would therefore interest the scientific investigator the most, are just those which are *incidental* to high spiritual enterprises. Nor will they ever be properly observed, or understood, except by those who are obeying the ancient injunction that if we first of all seek the Kingdom of Heaven all things shall be added unto us. As I have already insisted above, you cannot detach truths from their context. And the context in this case is the great realm of the Invisible which may be penetrated only by those who are seeking something more lofty and spiritual than mere "phenomena". This is no conspiracy or arbitrary law; it simply works out in practice that certain realities do not, and cannot, disclose themselves to the man whose deeper nature has not yet been awakened and purified. Just as art reveals itself only to artists, and love to lovers, so do the Mysteries reveal themselves only to those who are mystical. And there is no way by which this great law can be evaded.

Unless the soul as well as the scrutinizing intellect is involved in the enterprise of understanding, then all that results is a handful of external observations the inner key to which remains undiscovered. The element of sterility which so patently attaches to the patient and aseptic experiments of Professor Rhine and his colleagues illustrated this fact clearly enough. Reality is romantic—not scientific. If you want really to *know* you must first arouse the soul and wed science to spiritual aspiration, sacrifice and passion. Phenomena will then fall into their proper place—on the perimeter of existence.

But to venture deep is also to place oneself in a perilous situation. As every serious investigator of the esoteric sphere is aware, invisible forces can be extraordinarily dangerous. And in this fact we are provided with another reason for the failure of science to penetrate beneath the surface of the problem. For it is mercifully part of the scheme of things that power over the more interior cosmic forces is never given to those who are spiritually unqualified to handle them. The Mysteries have always been strictly guarded. They are guarded on the higher plane through the fact that the genuine seeker after occult power creates round himself such disturbing and alarming conditions that, unless he is a very exceptional individual, he either abandons his quest in despair or becomes mentally afflicted as a result of his meddling. And they are guarded on the lower plane by the fact that the scepticism and general spiritual insensitiveness which results from a materialistic or a narrowly scientific attitude to experience effectively prevents the investigator from penetrating to the deeper levels of the subject.

And now a final and most important consideration. For real illumination in this field there is demanded, not only respect for a wider range of factors than those of which science usually takes account, but also a measure of positive *faith*. In other words, the deeper keys to such phenomena will be disclosed only to those who are guided in their researches by the intuitive recognition of certain transcendental principles for which we have no "evidence" in the ordinary sense of the term. We must already be inwardly attuned to the Unseen before we can understand its laws.

For example, the ordinary scientist takes the view that any information outside the sphere of accepted and respectable scientific knowledge is of little or no assistance to him in his researches; he wants, as I have already said, to control the situation in his own all too simple terms.

We find Professor Rhine, for instance, ruefully recording in a recent article¹ the fact that his experiments with E.S.P. have now practically reached a deadlock. The workers in this field, even after years of research, have still, he says, scarcely any idea of the conditions which are propitious or unfavourable to the exercise of supernormal faculties in this realm—which is pretty well what one would in any case expect. Yet he does not even remotely consider the idea that the mass of remarkably consistent teachings available in spiritistic and esoteric literature regarding this question could assist him in his difficulties—they are far too dubious in their origin to be taken account of in such a strictly scientific enterprise!

¹ In *The Aryan Path*, April, 1942.

In actual fact, however, any serious student of the transcendental could provide him with all sorts of indications which could help him to find his way out of the impasse in which he has become involved. But of course he would not accept them, since he is adhering firmly to the delusive notion that practically the only qualities required for carrying out the enterprise in which he is engaged are patience, precision and detachment, and that only strictly "scientific" evidence can aid him in planning his researches.

And this view one must decisively reject. Reason alone is inadequate to the task. There are demanded also those perceptions and responses which come only from awakened soul life, attained through submission to widely different aspects of experience. If you wish to penetrate to the inside of life you must be something more than a detached and meticulous observer of phenomena.

What it comes to is that at a certain point the investigator will find himself obliged to accept the fact that clairvoyant evidence is self-certifying. The progress of research will depend upon facts perceived by the use of man's so-called "supranormal" faculties which, when properly trained, are just as reliable as are the physical senses. The notion that our knowledge of the inner worlds of being is only acceptable in that restricted realm in which it can be correlated with measurable physical happenings must be abandoned as being preposterously inadequate. Real understanding of this peculiar region will come only to those who have learned to trust their higher faculties instead of seeking to translate their findings to the level of physical observation.

And confident of the fact that they are in touch with reality they will go ahead—as indeed do all sensible workers in this field—without concerning themselves unduly about the attempts of orthodox science to limit the problem in terms of their own assumptions. In every sphere of experience those who know from the inside remain undisturbed by the doubts, misgivings and speculations of the uninitiated. And in the sphere of the supersensible this principle applies to an extreme degree.

4. *Subjective and Objective*

We have now examined both the attitude of the psychic investigator to the status of the evidence before him and the manner in which he conducts his researches in this field. What I now want to suggest is that his materialistic bias is manifested most significantly of all in the interpretation which he places upon the facts which he has collected. His disposition in most cases is to convert an

objective into a subjective, and therefore less disturbing, situation.

In considering how all this works out we must first of all gain a clear grasp of the elementary, but radically important, fact that psychology as such knows only the picture on the mental screen and has absolutely no authority to make any pronouncements regarding its ultimate source. It is a purely descriptive science, which is concerned primarily with the character of the images which present themselves to the mind and the mechanism by which they are generated. When such images are the result of the exercise of our physical senses we naturally assume that they correspond to an objective reality outside ourselves. When, however, they are the result of the exercise of the "imagination", we have the option of regarding them either as phantasies (productive or unproductive) of our own creation, or as the consequence of some form of non-physical perception. But in each of these cases all that is *immediately* known is a succession of psychological events; the rest is interpretation, correct or incorrect as the case may be.

It will thus be seen that the mere fact that a phenomenon is presented to the inner vision proves nothing either way as to its origin. The crude type of distinction established by the materialist between our experience of "real" things in the physical world, and our "subjective" experience of phantasies, proves to be of no fundamental value to us, for the sufficient reason that he has, *qua* psychologist, absolutely no means at his disposal for differentiating between a phantasy and the actual experience of a supraphysical objective reality. For both are known only in terms of images inside the head. Hence all supersensible experiences will necessarily *appear* as if they were purely "subjective" in character.

We might, if we cared to, describe the situation, in the style of Whitehead, as the Principle of Concealed Significance. Anyway it is of great importance, and its operation should be clearly understood.

Thus, if a real voice is heard from the Beyond it will necessarily sound as if it was produced inside the individual's own head. The control of a medium by an actual discarnate entity will present itself as still another case of multiple personality. An apparition which appears at the foot of the bed will be describable as a subjective phenomenon. A journey in the detached "astral" body will be attributed to a dream. The promptings of an invisible mer will be explainable as "one's own thoughts". Subjection to magical influences will look like the effect of private psychological tensions. And so on through a wide range of phenomena.

Nor, it must be remarked, can we extricate ourselves from this situation by appealing to the fact that in some cases the subject was at the time in a state of derangement. For there is always

very real possibility that such derangement is a necessary condition for contact with certain realms of invisible life. Because an individual has to be hysterical in order to have certain experiences, it does not mean that they are purely subjective. Although one does not fail to recognize the reality of the purely "private" creations of the subconscious mind, the fact remains that its activity may in numbers of cases simply serve to open the doors of supersensible perception.¹

The tendency of the psychic investigator is always, however, to reduce the situation to the lowest terms, so as to avoid at all costs any admission that the great world of unseen forces is a reality. Even if the existence of something supranormal must be conceded, it is divested as far as possible of any association with the mystical and the occult. Typical of this tendency is the classification in our libraries of all the literature relating to such phenomena under the head of "Mental Science". For thereby an essentially "other-word" situation is reduced to more familiar and less disturbing terms. Again, the conception of "cryptaesthesia" becomes of great assistance to the investigator, for the reason that by appealing to it he can postulate a direct mental connection between the mind and its object, and thus represent all the apparatus of communicating beings, astral voyages and psychic effects, as being merely subjective dramatizations accompanying, but not constituting, the real process at work. Yet it remains extremely doubtful whether the subconscious mind is endowed with the power of registering phenomena in independence of such supersensible machinery.

In the same way there are those who, although they believe that the realm of spirit is a reality, conclude that owing to the powerful individualizing tendency of our minds we break it up, as it were, into the images which we bring with us from our physical experience in contemplating it, registering what is really homogeneous in terms of fictitious places, events and people. Our minds, like prisms, split the original white ray into a multiplicity of delusive colours. We dramatize and differentiate what is really a simpler order of experience. Hence our psychic adventures, although they indeed relate to a supersensible reality, are chiefly determined by the activity of our earthbound minds in conditioning our transcendental experience of an undifferentiated whole.

Space does not permit me to criticize this theory in detail here. I suggest only that it is highly speculative, and one finds it in no case difficult to believe that matter exists only in the form

¹ The relation between subjective and objective psychism has been analysed with scientific accuracy by the joint authors of that valuable study, *The Psychic Sense* (1943), by P. D. Ouspensky and L. G. Bendit. This collaboration between a trained clairvoyante and a professional doctor is a piece of pioneer work which cannot be disregarded by any serious student of the subject.

familiar to us on earth, so that on becoming free of the body we are precipitously lost in the realm of the undifferentiated. Moreover, the theory is sharply contradicted both by the findings of psychic science and by all the teachings which have come down to us from the past regarding the conditions which await man after death. We have to assume, in fact, that incarnation is a far more thoroughgoing and protracted affair than certain over-facile transcendentalists would have us believe.

We must consider here also the problem of "suggestion". The view is now almost universally accepted that the element of "animal magnetism", which dangerously invokes the realm of the occult, has nothing to do with the phenomena. But this truth is actually far from being established. To begin with, the fact that transactions between operator and subject can be conveniently described as being merely "mental" does not exclude the possibility that a magnetic current is passing between them. And we have also to attach due importance to the fact—too often ignored—that a person can exercise the most powerful influence upon another by his "personality" alone, without resorting to any formal process of suggestion. Is it not very likely that this "personal" influence is communicated by a direct psychic current? Further, recent researches in this field point strongly to the conclusion that something of the sort occurs. And finally, we have surely to attach some importance to the testimony of psychically sensitive people who know such situations *from the inside* and can actually register directly the influx and efflux of such forces.

A little investigation will reveal the fact that such attempts to denude phenomena of their transcendental character are made in every direction. And it is disconcerting to discover that our religious thinkers, so far from standing up for the reality of the Invisible, accept for the most part with remarkable docility the interpretations advanced by men of science in this field.

One of the dangers of this attitude lies in the fact that it carries with it a serious threat to despiritualize the surrounding universe. No imaginative person can fail to realize that we are exposed to a range of invisible influences which is far more extensive than that small selection from them which is made by our physical senses. Nor can we safely conclude that we are entirely precluded from registering their impact upon our consciousness. Further, if we are religious we believe that the millions of souls who have passed over still persist; and when we are confronted with manifestations which suggest their continued activity we are bound to take them very seriously.

If, now, we take the hazardous course of working the principle of subjectivism to death, we are closing the door to all manner of realizations to which we should normally be open, and thereby

blocking every advance into the supraphysical realm. Were it simply a question of not multiplying hypotheses unjustifiably the situation would be straightforward enough. But in this case it is a question of resisting, by recourse to the subjectivist formula, a whole mass of influences which are pouring in upon us from beyond the Veil. Occam's razor as thus applied cuts us off, not only from superfluous assumptions, but also from realities of which we need to be aware.

One of the effects of this resistance to the transcendental is that, as is always the case when the greater is interpreted in terms of the lesser, we are presented with a mass of pseudo-explanations of the most complicated and far-fetched type. The more closely we look into them, the more strongly are we compelled to believe that the sole theory which introduces economy and intelligibility into the situation is the simplest of all—that we are in touch with discarnate intelligences which are working upon the situation from “the other side”. The only real objection that the man of science has to accepting such a view is that the unifying principle is operative *outside* the physical realm; in a parallel situation in which it was *inside* that realm he would accept it as a matter of course. But his fear of the “Unseen” is too strong for him.

Thus he cannot but perceive that there is an astonishing resemblance between the phenomena of hypnosis and mediumistic trance. In both instances the individual loses consciousness and a secondary personality emerges which manifests clairvoyance and the like. The only difference between them is that in one case the operator is physically present, and in the other invisible. But rather than admit the possibility of a controlling entity on other planes of being, the scientist will go to almost any length in devising purely psychological explanations for the manifestation.¹

Typical of this state of affairs is the theory advanced by science to explain the “projection” of subjective experiences into the objective realm. What it amounts to is something like this: Through the process of metabolism, which is all the time taking place within our bodily organism, the physical energy which we acquire through such agencies as food and sunlight is converted into psychic energy. This energy, when it is not properly liberated by being expressed in relation to the “real” physical world, can be released within the psyche itself, in which it generates a mass of subjective images, which can be extremely vivid and radiant in character. But we are

¹ To refer again to the researches of Dr. Wickland (VI, 35 n.), he brings forward in his book some impressive evidence against the over-facile theory of “multiple personality”. For he points out that whereas Morton Prince, for instance, considered the extraordinary case of Miss Beauchamp purely from the psychological angle, he himself has been able to catch a so-called secondary personality from an individual and cause it to manifest through the mediumship of his wife. Moreover the statements made by such personalities through her have often been verified afterwards and they have been proved to have been “real” men and women who formerly lived on earth.

so overcome by their vigour and brilliance that we forget that they represent only a psychologizing of our physical energies, and conclude instead that they owe their existence to the influence of transcendental forces acting upon our organisms from without.

As a result we create myths and other forms of hypostatization, evolve whole systems of planes, hierarchies and principalities, people the world around us with spirits, elementals and demons—all because we are overpowered by the exuberant character of our own vital processes. Conscious of an expansive impulse to love, we postulate an eternal God in whose love we are participating. Fascinated by the beauty of the world, we attribute its origin to angels instead of to our own constitution. Impressed by a strange sense of internal power, instead of realizing that caloric has been transformed into emotional energy, we flatter ourselves that we are responding to invisible occult forces. And so on.

But apart from the circumstance that, as we have seen, it is extremely difficult to decide where hallucination ends and psychic vision begins, we have to consider the fact that the mechanism whereby such subjective dramatizations are produced is one regarding which we have no direct knowledge whatever. It is simply *assumed* that the mind is endowed with a mysterious and essentially unobservable capacity to project certain pictures upon the inner sensorium through the inner activity of the psyche. But is this really true? It looks very much more as if we are involved with attempts on the part of the materialistic thinker to deny the reality of any realm beyond that of the senses.

In any case, apart from the purely conjectural character of these inner processes, we have to take account of the fact that in this field—apart from certain extreme cases of derangement—changes in psychological states are normally co-variant with changes in the external surroundings of the individual. As far as the great mass of humanity is concerned one is entitled to assume that when a person receives a distinct impression that some influence is being exerted upon him from an exterior, if intangible, source, it has an objective rather than a subjective origin. The human constitution is such that the alterations which take place in our consciousness are caused in the vast majority of cases by some change in our outer circumstances. We suddenly feel warm because the sun has come out; we are conscious of a draught because a window has been opened; we feel depressed because of the sights and sounds around us or the impression which they have left behind.

In a word, we are all the time being conditioned by a changing environment. And the only sane way to account for the experiences of the seers and sensitives among us (particularly when they have been properly trained) is to assume that that environment includes both a physical and a superphysical realm. The individual finds

himself in a certain sphere of supersensible influences and reacts accordingly. Such experiences are all the time happening to thousands of perfectly sane people, and it is simply perverse to represent them as being merely the products of a disordered interior activity.

Further, there are to be considered the difficulties which result for subjectivism when the psychic occurrence proves to involve knowledge of or control over physical events.¹ But here one need only refer the reader to the vast amount of material which has been collected by investigators in this field.

Another point which demands emphasis is that the objective reality of the supersensible realm is powerfully indicated by the effects which it produces upon the mind. Here attempts to explain the situation in terms of "suggestion" can hardly satisfy us. The theory is that psychological influences from without, reinforced by further influences from within, provide individuals with the energy necessary to develop a positive and creative attitude to life. The key lies in belief, not in the character of the object to which it is directed. We can rise to Heaven on the wings of *Als Ob*. It is only *our* end of the subjective-objective relation which really counts.

What it comes to, then, is this. Are there really such things as supersensible influences, which, although their efficacy may in some cases be aided by the attitude of the subject towards them, are yet potent whether he has conscious faith in them or not? Is there a *real* difference between, say, a talisman charged with "magic" power and another which has no such virtue? Can a room be consecrated so that its psychic character will be changed and that as a result it will affect those who enter it, whether they are aware of what has been done there or not? Do we have to reckon with the fact that in one case an individual only imagines that a discarnate personality is near him on another plane of being, and that in another case the presence of such a personality is a fact, as definite as the presence of a person in a physical body?

I submit that we have to reckon seriously with the fact that such supraphysical conditions are a reality, and that it is imposing far too heavy a burden on the psyche to assume that it can draw sufficient resources for mastering life from its own depths alone. The divine sustenance and power come to us, not only from within, but also from without, through the medium of the mighty universe, both in its physical and its supraphysical aspects. Our spiritual vitality depends upon association with real, extra-mental, forces, conditions and entities. If we ceased to be ministered to by unseen

¹ Thus Jung in one of his essays is reduced, in order to preserve his doctrine of dissociated complexes, to repudiate at all costs the materializing phenomena of the séance room—and thus finds himself in a highly precarious situation. See his paper on "Belief in Spirits", included in *Contributions to Analytical Psychology* (1928).

agencies we should speedily be lost. In the end, at least, it is only reality which "works". Just as nobody can be sustained for long by believing that under-nourishing meals are adequate to his bodily needs, so nobody can be spiritually sustained for long either by drawing upon purely subjective vitality or by believing that potent spiritual influences are radiating from some object or personality which is not actually a true source of power. When the theory of suggestion is pushed beyond a certain point it betrays all too evidently a materialistic bias against accepting the reality of the supersensible realm.

With all this it must be freely admitted that the problems raised by the phenomena which occur in this field are extremely complicated. Thus one may observe that it is not always a question of allocating a particular experience either to the objective or the subjective realm. It may of course be determined by both, as is the case with our ordinary experience of physical objects. My "dream" interview with my uncle may be at once a real happening, and deeply significant of my interior state. But nobody with any sense of proportion would assume that all the myriad objects with which I make contact through my physical senses in the course of a day are merely symbolical of a subjective drama—for what reveals inner conflict is not the mere seeing of something, but a morbid response to it. And in the same way we are bound to conclude that the great mass of psychic events which are displayed to the vision of the psychic observer are, on their own plane, just as little unconditioned by his private psychological conflicts.

Nevertheless, we have to reckon with certain deep and peculiar manifestations, the mark of which is that a real subjective experience is worked out in the form of actual happenings on another plane of being. What is then involved is that the soul comes into contact with places and beings in the Unseen which are strictly appropriate to the inner drama which it is momentarily living through.

We have to consider, in fact, the possibility that we are concerned with a region of experience in which there is a peculiar correspondence between inner states and outer locations. We move about among real non-physical objects which are deeply consonant in character with our internal spiritual condition. And this consonance exists all the time whether we are conscious of the fact or not. The mystic in meditation who is experiencing a condition of elevation would undoubtedly, were his inner sight opened, become aware of a realm of transcendental life appropriate to the spiritual condition to which he had attained. And of course in the opposite direction the satanist or the sensualist would have a corresponding experience. In other words, in this realm the subjective is the inward aspect of the objective.

This is an ancient esoteric doctrine, and it is fully borne out by

the experience of sensitives in this field. What appears to be only an allegory of the soul's private history is really at the same time a description of the very real regions of supraphysical being associated with its succeeding phases of growth. Passage along one of the paths of the Kabbalistic Tree of Life is as much an objective experience as is a passage along the Great North Road.

Finally I would call attention to the extraordinary amount of confusion which results in this field from the reduction of supranormal experiences to purely subjective terms. Anything which happens to an individual on another plane of being is interpreted as a dramatization of an intrapsychic situation. If I really establish contact with a person "on the other side", the fact becomes for the psychologist simply an indication of some internal disturbance. If I really hear voices, I am losing my reason. If I really visit some beautiful place in the sleep states, it is only an expression of escapism. And so on. To gain some idea of the misrepresentation of truth which is here involved, one has only to imagine what would be the results of interpreting a series of events in a person's waking life in terms of a purely subjective drama!

5. *The Ensoulment of Matter*

In concluding this chapter I must say something regarding the possibilities which open up before us if we approach the problem of the supraphysical from a less conventional angle. Admittedly we are faced by formidable difficulties. But the only hope of dealing with them lies in thinking in new and more flexible categories than those provided by orthodox science. If we wish to gain any real grip upon the problem, we must be prepared to abandon all sorts of conceptions on which we rely in dealing with the more ordinary world of our experience. And here the first point to be emphasized is that the sort of relationships with which we here become concerned must be clearly distinguished from those which are embraced by the primitive magician.

The savage believes in magical forces largely—though not to the degree implied by the theories of the anthropologists—as a *substitute* for natural ones. He thereby cuts himself off from learning the truth about the actual physical behaviour of objects. The enlightened student of these questions, on the contrary, is concerned with the interior aspect of known laws or with operations which suspend or modify them. He does not ignore the normal field of causality, but enlarges it by introducing additional supraphysical factors into the equation.

Further, in entering this field he finds himself, as is naturally to be expected, obliged to think in terms of principles which are of a widely different order from those which regulate the more

external and material aspects of the universe. As we move inwards towards the deeper levels of existence we find that we are compelled to make use of categories of an unfamiliar and a perplexing type. The systematizations of rationalism begin to fail us, for we are now dealing with another dimension of being which has only an indirect connection with that controlled by normal scientific laws. I stress this point for the reason that the doctrines of transcendental science are so often evaluated by insensitive critics as if they represented nothing more than the result of the *abuse* of reason in the ordinary realm, of a denial of the principles which regulate the world of our ordinary experience. But actually they relate to a cross-section of the universe made at a different angle altogether, and one in which the subjective elements in reality play a much larger part.

As will naturally be understood, we here become concerned with conceptions which the orthodox scientist treats with a high degree of suspicion. Because certain configurations and structures have no function or meaning in his own dimension of thought, he finds it extremely difficult to believe that they have any validity in others. Thus, number as such has no significance in physics or chemistry; nothing specific happens to, say, five pieces of metal simply by virtue of the fact that they amount to five. Similarly, in respect to form, the physical or chemical behaviour of, say, a piece of copper is not affected by the fact that it is cut in the form of a star rather than in that of a circle. Or again, as to colour, there is no significance from the scientific standpoint in the fact that a disc is painted red, except in so far as red is associated with certain known physical phenomena. Or with regard to time, there is, for ordinary science, no evidence that the character of an event is affected by the fact that it occurs on the ninth day of the moon. And in the same way the orientation of an object to the north will have meaning for science only to the extent that the activity is involved of some known influence like that of the magnetic current.

Yet, as in this era our contact with the Unseen gradually becomes more close, we are being compelled to recognize that relationships of this order are just as likely to be valid as any other, and that the refusal of the average scientist to take them seriously is largely the result of his having been accustomed to think exclusively in terms of certain limited types of notation.

But perhaps the most perplexing problems offered to the investigator in this field are those which arise through the fact that, as already remarked earlier, we now find ourselves in a realm in which the basically subjective-objective character of the universe is far more in evidence than it is in the world of our ordinary sensory experience. In other words, the further we move inwards from the surface, the more completely do we become involved with a region of

being in which phenomena are determined by the minds which are contemplating them. In that hard daylight world in which science is at home, objects and their relations remain the same irrespective of our emotional attitude towards them; and it is this stability and seeming independence of the observer which provides the rationalist with the basis for his philosophy. Incarnation entails essentially, in fact, the subordination of interior to exterior relationships. Propinquity carries with it no necessary implication of affinity. Life in a physical body involves the maximum accentuation of otherness, the greatest possible coincidence of immediacy and irrelevance. For only thus can it perform the tremendous function of awakening us to a condition of full self-realization.

When, however, we penetrate beneath this surface what we discover is that forms acquire a more plastic character. Environment begins to correspond increasingly closely with modes of consciousness. Interior soul states, instead of being, as is the case in this world, only very partially and intermittently reflected in externals, now find more direct expression, so that the true nature of objects and personalities is more and more faithfully mirrored in the characteristics which they assume and the relations into which they enter. As we draw nearer to the Within the discrepancy between appearance and reality steadily diminishes. Sympathy determines location. External arrangements, instead of being the product of merely casual circumstances—as when, say, in the physical world a miscellaneous collection of people find themselves together in a 'bus—are now internally conditioned. And since interior states change with great rapidity, so also, in this realm, will the outward forms in which they are reflected.

All this is quite consistent, however, with strictly determined order and structure. There is no question of the inner worlds being of the order of a chaotic phantasmagoria—although like all worlds they may be reflected as such in a diseased mind. The point is simply that a more direct relation exists between internal and external conditions of being. Or to put it another way, there is less subordination to the processes of time. Being can translate itself into manifestation in far less laborious terms.

It is this close correspondence between subjective and objective states which provides the key to the greatly misunderstood operations of "magic". Thus if I magnetize a gem it becomes charged with a certain kind of force, and as a result acquires an additional property, which can be accurately registered, although not by ordinary scientific means. But this force has been set in operation by psychic means alone, by the exercise of the power of the soul. Further, between myself and the gem there is established as a result a peculiar *rapport*, so that it becomes, as it were, personalized. By concentrating upon it, a sensitive can discover the nature of my

character and situation. In a word, the psychic and the physical realms have been interfused, and problems thereby created which cannot be solved by the technique of mechanics. Or rather, as a result of overcoming rationalistic "bifurcation" they appear in their true organic relationship as twin aspects of one realm of being.

Still more extreme does the situation become when by maintaining a certain inner condition of mind I modify—as the esotericist believes is possible—the character of events without having recourse to physical means to do so. By "occult" power I draw to myself a certain book or individual, or protect myself against the activity of inimical forces. My passage through life becomes modified in such a way that my personal history coincides with the general history of events in a new fashion; I thereby receive a protection and scope which I should not otherwise enjoy. And so on. Extreme as all this may sound, one must insist that if a person finds the process incredible it is only because he is approaching the problem with the unfounded assumption in his mind that there is a fixed and rigid order of objective events which proceeds independently of our "personal" relations with them. Actually, however, there exists only a total subjective-objective complex out of which rationalism for its own purposes carves a tidy and superficial system of mechanically determined relationships. But that system is no more independent of the remainder of the organic whole than is, say, grammar of the statement made by a poem. To this I shall return in Part Two.

Finally it may be observed that "magic" is by no means exclusively the work of those who are addressing themselves to it with deliberate intent. The forces latent in the Unseen are being called into operation all the time more or less unconsciously by men and women everywhere—though of course the expert and deliberate operator works with far greater economy and effect. Intense desire, prayer, sympathy, visualization, psychic emanations and projections of all sorts, are continually active in determining the nature of the invisible sphere within which our lives are passed. And if we could but realize the fact, all the manifold illnesses, accidents, encounters, discoveries, creative achievements and vicissitudes which we unreflectingly attribute to "chance" or to purely physical causes are in reality but the outworkings of these deeper interior influences, influences which are traceable in many cases to the remote past. Our outer conditions, individually and collectively, are precipitations of conditions prevailing in other realms of being.

And here we are provided with a scientific justification of the importance attached by all true religious thinkers to the control of thought and emotion. For they intuitively recognize—unless as students of these questions they have attained to a more exact

knowledge of what is involved—that our mental activity is creative in a sense which the naturalistic thinker fails completely to suspect. Behind and within the processes studied by science our thoughts do actually weave the pattern of our individual and collective destiny. We create around ourselves a psychic “field” within which lie the ultimate causes of the physical processes by which we are conditioned.

PART TWO

ISIS



CHAPTER ONE

HEAVEN AND EARTH

THE first section of this book has been devoted almost entirely to indicating the limitations of the rationalistic attitude to experience as it finds expression particularly in scientific thought. And the final effect of the survey is, I hope, to persuade the reader that we have little hope of gaining any really fundamental control over our lives unless we are prepared to deepen our consciousness by turning for illumination within. If we wish to understand and act with creativeness and discrimination we must learn to listen, not merely to the deliverances of the intellect, but to the more interior voice of the soul. This, not in an attempt to retreat from externals into the sphere of the subjective, but because only out of that sphere can the objective be truly controlled. ■

For the purpose of undertaking such an analysis, however, I have so far been obliged to consider this realm, not in and for itself, but only in so far as it presents a challenge to the values of an unimaginative positivism. It is now time to turn to the more creative side of the problem: the exploration of this strange inner world as it appears, not to the so-called "sceptic", but to those men and women whose attitude towards it is sympathetic, and who have a natural intuitive understanding of its nature.

Our task will fundamentally be the same as that with which we have so far been occupied: that of determining the relation between the inside and the outside of life. But from now onwards we shall contemplate it from within instead of from without the Mystery. I begin with some introductory remarks on a theme which is absolutely fundamental for our enquiry: the relation between the western and the eastern attitudes to the world.

I. *West and East*

There will be little need to emphasize the fact that in our attempts to interiorize our awareness we in the Occident are committed to a severe struggle with very powerful influences in the opposite direction. There have always, of course, been those amongst us who were capable of a more mystical approach to life. But what may be described as the official tradition has been almost unremittingly of

the side of those who place their trust in reason. Whether we consider Greek rationalism, Roman Law, mediaeval scholasticism, or modern science and philosophy, the emphasis has been to a marked degree on the side of masculine logic and analysis. Perhaps only in the Romantic Movement did Western European man really consider seriously for a time the possibilities of a more poetic and inspirational type of consciousness. But just as he was beginning to awaken to them the door was closed for a long season upon further developments in this direction by the rapid and irresistible growth of scientific enquiry, which finally became the dominant theme of his life and absorbed as a result nearly all his powers. And only now are we beginning to wonder whether in our eager pursuit of one type of knowledge we have not imprudently neglected others with which we can ill afford to dispense.

This does not simply mean, however, that some of us are again becoming interested in the potential significance of such thinkers as Schiller, the Schlegels and Coleridge. As a result of subsequent developments in our cultural history the problem now presents itself to us in somewhat different terms: we now see it more as that of reconciling the knowledge of the West with that of the East. Not that we believe that, as certain extremists would maintain, our only hope of salvation lies in placing ourselves unreservedly at the feet of the oriental sages! But we have certainly realized that our excessive external awareness must be balanced by an order of internal realization which is characteristically eastern, even though it be also true that it is fostered in a subordinate sense by our western tradition.

The key to the situation lies evidently in synthesis. That release from bondage to a space-time consciousness for which we are all of us, both western and eastern, so earnestly seeking can be secured only by combining interior experience of Being with full exterior knowledge of that vast universe which is its manifested complement. Until we can understand and control the world of phenomena from deep interior centre we shall never know any true emancipation from our present unhappy condition.

If we look at the matter from this point of view we find that there is really very little to choose between the failure of western and that of eastern civilization. All one can say is that disorder in one case typically finds expression in terms of violence, egoism, materialism and sensationism, and in the other in terms of apathy, formlessness, impotence, fatalism and inertia.

The problem for the oriental thinker in the present epoch is obviously that of coming to terms with the demands of earthly experience; the increasing concern of some of the best minds in India with sociological questions is significant enough of the direction in which the tide is now flowing. It is evident enough that although

theoretically ample support can be derived from eastern doctrines for the gospel of action, a race which has evolved and worked out so thoroughly the subtle doctrine of *maya* is inevitably faced to an exceptional degree with the danger of losing its grip on objective realities. This weakness is expressed, one feels, in the fascinating, but curiously dream-like, quality of Indian writing in particular. Extraordinarily subtle, and highly intelligent, it gives the impression—a few brilliant exceptions apart—more of reflection than of affirmation; we feel that the author is not primarily addressing his readers but indulging in an interior monologue. And this withdrawn condition, with its characteristic indifference to the hard and sharp contrasts of objective existence, makes also for a deficiency in that humour which is so precious to our western minds. As Professor Joad has justly remarked, wit is a fruit which grows but rarely in the lush jungle of Hindu thought.

In the West, of course, the emphasis is in exactly the opposite direction: it is the subjective sphere which is neglected—with the consequences to which I have already alluded above. And these aberrations all have their roots in the fact that our culture is through and through materialistic. Yet the positive element in the situation must not be ignored. The detached, and particularly the oriental, observer finds it only too easy to build up a picture of the West as a region in which men are pursuing delusive and superficial aims in an atmosphere of agitation, wastefulness and disorder. To the eyes of these sages we appear as a race of children who are still in grievous bondage to the senses and who have hardly yet attained to the preliminary realizations regarding the deeper nature of Reality. Even the achievements which lie to our credit in this field belong only to the sphere of externals: scientific research merely serves to extend our knowledge of the phenomenal. And what is the phenomenal to a mind which has attained to a vision of the nature of transcendental reality?

Now, the answer to all this can only be that, as usual, we are concerned with only one half of the truth. It must be admitted that the sovereign need of the western individual is to learn to deepen his inner consciousness. It must be admitted also that he is disastrously limited by the materialism of his outlook, and that in the realm of pure metaphysical knowledge (which has little to do with metaphysics as understood by most philosophers) the orient is his master. But what his critics usually fail to perceive is that however crude the conceptions with which he is working, he has to his credit the impressive achievement represented by the power to objectify truth in a fashion of which the oriental is largely incapable. The tremendous capacity of the westerner for translating his conceptions into material form, for making physical situations *real*, for embodying the Idea in the most complete and unmistakable

sense, although it is at present abused in the most disastrous fashion, has nevertheless enormous spiritual significance for the future. For it means a potential ability to make the Word flesh, to bring interior states into full and convincing external expression.

If we wish to penetrate to the inner spirit of the West we must consider the outstanding vices of its civilization in relation to the virtues of which they are the inversion and shadow. Materialism, restless and misdirected energy, phenomenism, exacerbated individualism—these are but the first crude manifestations of a power over cosmic forces which will one day, when the occidental soul has at last been interiorly orientalized, be impressive indeed. People who are truly expressing themselves in freedom as fully incarnated personalities, and doing so by exercising their command over the whole natural realm, centred in the Transcendental, yet identified with the Immanent, God—that is the ideal towards which, in spite of all the confusion and conflict, we in the Occident are making our slow, agonized, yet certain path. We have been born to embody the Divine—just as the oriental has been born to etherialize the material. Instead of transcending matter by withdrawing our attention from it, our destiny is to compel it to such powerful and harmonious rhythms that in the process it will become as it were sublimated and spiritualized out of existence. For perfectly regulated pattern and motion is itself a mode of dematerialization. That in the sensible which reflects with any faithfulness the divine order has already by that very fact entered the sphere of the transcendental.

This, however, is not the end of the matter. For the psychological aspect of the typical western control over natural forces is the principle of active love: energy expressed in relating soul to soul, not only on the spiritual plane, but through the medium of that matter of which the technician is master. And the final result of this synthesis will be an achievement of the greatest metaphysical significance, since it will amount to nothing less than the personalization of cosmic forces, or the true ensoulment of matter.

In other words we in the West are following a path which will eventually lead us to realize the Within primarily in the objective mode, in terms of *inspired action*. And although this does not mean that we can dispense with the wisdom of the East, it does undoubtedly mean that the most creative possibilities before us are in the direction of realizing the potentialities of the occidental mode of consciousness.

In the West, we are committed, then, to a world-affirming philosophy, according to which the expression of our soul life in the outer cosmos has real worth and meaning. But such exteriorization involves us, as we have also seen, with the problem of showing complete respect to the complementary claims of subjective and

objective being. And in seeking to do so the only ground on which we can safely take our stand is the assumption that, although it is unquestionably demanded of us that we should master the realm of matter, we can do so only by identifying ourselves primarily with the realm of spirit. In a word, the condition of outward world acceptance is an interior process of world denial. Our problem is to conquer the manifested universe; but that universe will become intelligible to us and subject to our wills only to the degree that, paradoxically enough, we become inwardly established in that which transcends it.

But although it is incumbent upon us to accept the severe implications of incarnation this does not by any means imply that we are thereby committed to a "realist" conception of the universe. Realism in the psychological sphere is perfectly compatible with objective idealism in that of philosophy. For what is important to us in this connection is not what may be described as the *status* of the universe—the question of how far it is mental or material in character—but its *objectivity*. And that objectivity remains for us whatever its philosophical location. It really makes very little difference—since the question is in any case beyond our power of verification—whether we work on the (very unsatisfactory) assumption that qualities inhere in a featureless medium which somehow supports them and are discerned by our minds, or whether we assume, as we are equally entitled to, that the raw material of existence acquires significance and meaning only when it is appropriated and differentiated by the intellect. Whether we believe that matter becomes real only when it gets inside mind, or that mind experiences reality only when it gets outside itself, we are equally involved with the obligation, already referred to earlier, of passing out of our private subjectivity into a world of common experience.

For in both cases we have to reckon with an objective universe—psychic or physical as the case may be—which is there for us all, a system of relationships with which the individual cannot afford to trifle, and to which he must adapt himself or perish. Whatever the nature of our dream, it is indisputably a *collective* dream, an experience of the general consciousness, what the Indians describe as *mahamaya*. An individual mental event, such as an "imaginary" breakfast, may indeed make a poor enough show amongst a collection of satisfyingly "real" objects. But if the whole world of our experience is mental in character the situation is indistinguishable from that which we habitually accept as normal. The problem therefore becomes that of relating one's private to a universal experience which is no less universal for being pan-subjective in character. The majesty of a range of mountains is not affected by their technical metaphysical status. And the greatness of Shake-

Olare's plays remains, whether they are played on an "objective" or a "subjective" stage.

In other words, objectivity means the compulsion to act according to the conditions imposed upon us from without. And just as we have to respect the rules of chess whether we are playing with wooden or with ivory pieces, so in this greater Game we must submit equally to external necessity whether the units in terms of which the drama is worked out are mental or material in character.

2. *The Way of Escape*

I have already suggested that the momentous problem with which we are concerned in the West is that of discovering that centre within ourselves from which our external adaptations can be controlled. Our only hope lies in gaining a deeper understanding of the mystery of the Unmanifested. But even in the Occident there is for many a danger which presents itself in the opposite direction—that of what may be termed cosmophobia, or excessive pre-occupation with the Within.

The obligation to accept the demands of the concrete is, however, one with which the spiritually sensitive find it notoriously difficult to comply. And this, it may be remarked, is a consideration which may easily prove to be of crucial importance for the future. For such are the changes and chances of history that with the deepening of the feminine element in our consciousness, excess in this direction may in course of time bring with it as serious a threat to our psychological stability as does that orgy of scientific thinking against which we are at last beginning to revolt.

The principle which is involved, which is extremely important, may be stated in the following terms: The metaphysical equivalent of invisible Substance can only be exact, concrete facts, "minute particulars" and their combinations. It is such clear and distinct forms alone which may be said to define themselves within the ocean of cosmic being. Interior absorption in the spiritual makes inevitably for the emergence of sharp, hard outlines, configurations which cannot be trifled with. It is only sentimentality and inferior romanticism which present us with blurred shapes, misty perspectives and weak dilutions of reality. Heaven can find an earthly abiding place only in that which lies furthest from itself. There is no middle zone in which it can be truly incarnated. Our response to the infinite Mystery at the heart of things can be properly expressed only by submission to the most rigorous disciplines of science, life and art. All true realism unifies the depths of the subjective with the extremes of manifestation. Meaning emerges only in the concrete. In turning outwards to discover an adequate image of

that which lies deepest within us we come to rest finally in transfigured object.

Neglect of this fundamental realization finds expression in those different modes of retreat from actuality with which the psychologists have made us familiar. They all involve in one way or another a lowering of the significance of the objective world by diminishing its status, neutralizing the threat which it offers to the withdrawn and apprehensive introvert. Whether or not the intellect is pressed into this ignominious service is a question of subordinate importance. The basic fact is that the individual finds life too much for him.

From this point of view we must regard even the attitude of the quietist with a certain suspicion. It is certainly true that the spiritual can be experienced on this plane in a very lofty sense. In the objective mode there results a vision in the light of which the object before one appears as absolute. It is perceived, as it were, in the midst of a transcendental stillness in which it discloses its essential nature to the observer, remaining suspended for him in his ecstatic Bergsonian moments beyond the limitations of space and time. The aim of the artist is to retain this infinitely precious realization and to record it with the greatest possible fidelity.

This involves, of course, a high achievement—although as we shall see later it is in one sense incomplete. But it is at least not attended by the dangers invited by quietism in its subjective mode. Here we have a deep process of introversion in which the soul, forgetting the objects of sense, communes interiorly with the Mystery. In this experience space and time are also transcended, although the external faculties are dormant. The contemplative becomes completely absorbed in the process of association with unmanifested Being. He strives to penetrate ever more deeply into an inner sphere of transcendental light, which he perfectly justifiably regards as being more wonderful and real than that conditioned sphere in which he lives in a state of exile during his normal life. His supreme aim is to enter more and more completely into this liberated condition, his terrestrial existence being reduced to a matter of discipline, service and the resigned expiation of the past. He seeks, in the spirit of so many oriental transcendentalists, to disengage himself from matter, which he conceives of as being either evil or illusory in character.

But although this attitude is essentially eastern—if we except the magnificent dynamism of the Gita—it has been cultivated no less intensively by escapists in the West. And in this connection it is interesting to note that in the whole of Dom Cuthbert Butler's *Western Mysticism* one can discover scarcely a single passage (except one from St. Gregory) in which introversion is extolled, not

only for itself, but on account of its function in perfecting action. Although there is manifested a profound sense of the Within, there is little realization of its significance as the transforming principle of the Without. And this can scarcely satisfy us.

To consider now the less elevated aspects of subjectivism, we have first of all the (typically feminine) condition of being overpowered by the immediate. This leads to attempts to establish too intense and unconditioned relations with what is before one, at the expense of respect for the general and the remote. The individual denies in one way or another the obligation to express his feelings more painfully and circuitously through that uncompromising external system of things which at once oppresses and disciplines the over-enthusiastic soul. In a word, he refuses to submit to the prosaic, to put poetry in its proper place in a severely material world.

Another mode in which our experience of the Infinite can be distorted consists simply in unduly extended awareness. Receptivity, imagination and sympathy when inadequately disciplined increase the contents of consciousness beyond the point at which they can be creatively assimilated. The effect is dissipation and diffusion. Instead of passing his experience through the sieve of limitation and concretization, the person loses himself in a sea of impressions and responses. On the simplest level this makes for sentimentality, vagueness, a generally confused and unfocused attitude to the world. In more subtle terms it makes for heightened and acute, but essentially *unproductive*, consciousness, as in the case of the sterile and unduly passive spectator, or the intellectual who has over-elaborated his awareness to a stultifying degree.

Significant also from the point of view of our present enquiry is what may fairly be described as the disease of moral idealism, the source of which lies, one must conclude, in a condition of arrested adolescence. There are natures which are endowed with a genuine capacity for responding imaginatively, and far too easily, to that inner world of beauty and truth which lies behind the veil of materiality; and what they have to tell us about it is valuable enough. But they fail to recognize that they are living only in one part of themselves which has been projected dangerously ahead of the rest, and consequently have only the slightest capacity for understanding or admitting the inescapable implications of their enlightened views. A psychic submarine, the "advanced thinker" of this type surveys through his periscope a beautiful and refreshing expanse of sea and sky. But the rest of his being, the existence of which he has largely repudiated, is all the time submerged in the same dark flood of unregenerate life in which we are all so desperately struggling for our existence. And until he admits the fact none of his lofty

pronouncements, however valid they may be from one point of view, have any real power to move our souls.

Finally, we have to reckon with the characteristic weaknesses of the more mystical type of personality, which find expression always, unless the individual is highly developed, in a bewildered, apprehensive, "tender-minded", and generally negative attitude towards the realm of earthly existence in which he feels himself to be so poignantly in exile. But his failure on this plane is not so despicable as may superficially appear, since he has an interior consciousness, whether clear or confused, of a far more liberated state of being than that known to the mass of men, and the contrast which it presents with actuality is indeed a hard one for him to bear.

In view of the severe criticism to which this type of personality is subjected in the present scientific age, and of the great importance of the contribution which such people have to make to the regeneration of society, it is essential that we should make every effort to gain a sympathetic understanding of their psychology. It must be recognized that they are in only too many cases unstable, highly-strung, sensitive, uncritical and even credulous to a marked degree. It is true that it is possible to be "interested in" the Unseen, and even have some mild experience of superphysical forces, without losing one's balance. And one can also be a mystic of the quietistic type without inviting any serious psychological disturbances. But once the *psychic* nature is fully aroused it is a different story. We know well enough that when sexual passion, patriotism or partisan interests are thoroughly awakened the most "sane" and "balanced" individuals are capable of making fools of themselves in the most extravagant fashion. And it is exactly the same when the romance of the Invisible really begins to exercise its fascination on the soul. Only in this way can we explain the extraordinary power of "magical" personalities everywhere upon the emotionally susceptible. In spite of the fact that they usually combine the possession of genuine spiritual attainments with the resourcefulness and the impudence of the charlatan, and that they are capable of the most irresponsible behaviour, they attract and retain an endless stream of followers and prove themselves capable of living down one indiscretion after another with undiminished resilience.

The explanation, I suggest, lies in the following fact. The inspirational and imaginative types amongst us ~~know~~ perfectly clearly in the depths of their souls that rationalism is superficial, that the "soundness" and respectability of orthodox religion represents only a very limited aspect of the spiritual life, that we apprehend truth properly only in terms of deep emotion (controlled ideally by reason), and that reality—as opposed to the drab abstractions made from it by utilitarianism and conventional morality—

is intensely romantic, magnetic, dangerous and mysterious. If there is no colour, sonority, strangeness, intensity and melody, this affords decisive evidence that we are still outside the charmed circle.

As a result such natures are at one and the same time extraordinarily discerning and indiscriminating in their dealings with life. In the first place—as against the self-possessed critical spectator—one must stick to the fact that they have a natural insight into the deeper levels of existence, an intuitive response to the sphere of essential being. They register with remarkable certainty the presence, the aroma, the emanations of the spiritual. They feel, quite distinctly, that certain persons, settings, activities bring them in touch with a wonderful realm of unseen life—a realm which is just as definitely closed to the “realistic” observer. But no less decisively are they naive and credulous regarding the objective aspect of this interior situation. Hence they are capable of enthusiastically swallowing almost any nonsense—provided only it be associated with certain higher elements of experience to which they are sensitive; though we must not forget that we have also to reckon here with exceptional personalities who are able to combine such discrimination with true objectivity.

The essential thing to realize is that such people are as important as—and very possibly even more important than—the masters of the objective plane. For, with all their limitations, they are in contact with a real and potent sphere of inner being, on our understanding of which everything in the end depends. However extravagant their errors, however feeble their grasp of logical issues, however imperfect their control over matter, they are performing a pioneer work of momentous significance in raising our minds above the level of the physical senses and linking together the seen and the Unseen. And both on psychological and spiritual grounds one sees no reason why their achievement should be rated any lower than that of thinkers who excel in controlling the world of objective facts.

3. *The Principle of Severity*

With all this, however, we must hold fast to the principle that the primary demand upon us is that of mastering the problems of earthly existence. And here it will be clear that the basic corrective of every form of excessive subjectivity is provided by submission, in one way or another, to the masculine principle of limitation and definition. Although inner expansion is the very condition of our life, it is at the same time essential that we should accept the sombre fact of incarnation, the localization of consciousness within the sepulchre of space and time—that we may at last arise from it and enter into true freedom. Hence emotion, instead of being released

unproductively in the form of an inappropriate, false or premature response to the Infinite, must become instead the inner dynamic of realistic action. Feeling must be converted directly into objective performance, with as little leakage as possible in the intermediate region of soulfulness.

Such acceptance of the concrete is the very nerve of science. And it is also, of course, a basic element in all serious art, the mark of which is that the universal is expressed in exact, accurate and intensive terms. But concretization of this order is here achieved only in the realm of imaginative creation and, as will appear later, has by no means the same significance as equivalent achievement in terms of actual living. Submission to the finite in the more serious sense means therefore acceptance of the conditions imposed on one by Fate. It means that all those infinitely precious flowers and jewels which present themselves to the eye of imagination must be set within that gaunt, bare, large-scale, grand and uncompromising framework of things of which man is the master. The refined, delicate, but oppressive and over-emotionalized atmosphere which is evoked by undue absorption in subjective experience must be ventilated by identification with wider, more invigorating and heroic purposes. And even if they involve, as they necessarily must, a considerable amount of falsity, they will at least have the effect of increasing the sweep of the mind's operations, of strengthening the spirit, and of balancing appreciation and appraisal by salutary and antiseptic action.

In a cruder form this challenge to excessive introversion is today provided by the practical demands which are being made upon the citizen in an age in which material and social problems are in the foreground of our attention. But there is a much deeper and more important impulse to objectivity which comes, not from the external pressure of events, but from a primary submission to the Spirit within. In other words, the individual discovers at a certain point that he must limit his outer relationships and activities, not only through outward compulsion, but as a result of an impulse from within. He imposes upon himself a voluntary austerity which has actually immeasurably more significance than any mechanical discipline to which he may be subjected from without, and which usually leaves little impression on the soul once it has been withdrawn; for between voluntary renunciation and mere deprivation there is indeed a universe of difference.

If we consider "realism" from the point of view of spiritual dedication we find that we have become concerned with the masculine principle of conation in its most definite and concentrated form. And it is evidently from the ethical point of view of supreme importance. For only through determined action—even if it be painfully misguided and chaotic in its results—can the deeper

spiritual nature be aroused. The answer to the contemplative aesthete who is withdrawn from humiliating extravagances and wasteful adventures is that we identify ourselves with Reality primarily through the moral will; only by following this path can we truly *become*. And since action involves us necessarily with our fellow-men, it is chiefly through action that we achieve true solidarity with them.

This is shown negatively by the fact that the revelation which is afforded to us outwardly through the senses is essentially preliminary in character. At some point or other, either insensibly or catastrophically, the soul discovers with distress that the Spectacle in which it has so long delighted has lost its original charm and power. Apathy steals upon the spirit. The Wonder Land becomes the Waste Land. The Mirror ceases to perform its magical office of reflecting infinite facets of truth. The individual enters upon that deep experience known in the East as *vairāgya* and in the West as the Dark Night of the Senses. The Light must now be found within.

As a result the spectator becomes the pilgrim. Not the pilgrim through the fascinating landscape of aesthetic experience, but the pilgrim through dark, lonely and stony places, guided symbolically only by the lantern of self-luminosity. This, and only this, is the true spiritual journey.

All action involves a stern degree of selection, renunciation and limitation. But everything turns on the *degré* to which we are committed to it. Of course, even in an existence which is primarily contemplative there may be an unqualified acceptance of aesthetic discipline and a great deal of doing, endless decisions, exclusions and acceptances. But although every healthy life must necessarily have all sorts of positive elements in its fabric, it remains true that when we really enter the realm of the spiritual, action acquires a far more momentous character than it previously possessed. It is not now sufficient even to be "an artist in life". When the call is sounded to identify oneself really radically with the Spirit the individual finds himself compelled to such limited and protracted modes of activity that his life becomes effectively one of renunciation. Instead of growing primarily by developing responsiveness and appreciation he now grows by service, dedication, self-effacement and sacrifice—all those activities from which the sophisticated and refined are apt to shrink. For only by the intense and unremitting exercise of the will—which means always holding fast to a single aim in the face of all possible trials and seductions—can true self-realization be achieved.

Lest, however, this doctrine should appear to the reader to be unduly forbidding, I would add that there is a profound difference between the repellent "purposiveness" of the disciplined egoist and

the restraint of the dedicated mystic who, while surrendering to the objective, is yet identifying himself inwardly with the universal principle of creativeness and love. For even though there may be a certain muted and even apparently repressed quality about his personality, something of the glory to which he is opening his soul within is bound to disclose itself through the mask of his outward decorum. Even if its flame be still dim the authentic fire has been lit at the centre, and as time goes on will shine forth from the depths with ever greater power.

4. *From Poetry to Science*

Leaving aside, however, such extreme renunciations, we can perceive that the element of objectivity is assuming tremendous importance in the spiritual life of our age—and this not only in a disastrous, but also in a deeply creative, sense. We are realizing that life and meaning are manifested only in the concrete. And unless a person is capable of translating his interior life into such terms we feel that he has not yet properly come to grips with reality.

In other words, the accent is shifting from poetry to science. It is certainly true that without romance, idealism, and even glamour, we are lost. But at the same time it is no less apparent that when, with advancing years, we begin properly to submit to the weighty implications of incarnation we realize that we are called upon to live largely in exile from our true spiritual home. Any undue concern with the radiant surface of things, however lofty the mysteries which it reveals, belongs really to an adolescent stage of consciousness. Youth is lyrical, fascinated with appearances and effects, with the high and holy signatures set upon phenomena. Maturity, if it has contrived to avoid cynicism, accepts resignedly the less exhilarating, but more massive and responsible, obligation to penetrate to their origin, to discover the hidden conditions which determine their manifestation.¹

It is true enough that art at its highest reveals to us in terms of beauty spiritual truths which can be conveyed to us in no other mode. There is no substitute for the apprehension and transcription of values. We have taken note earlier of the fallacy of elementarism: the belief that we have dealt with a manifestation when we have discovered the processes which bring it about. We must not confound mechanism with meaning. Thus, however comprehensive the account given us by the scientist of the working of our internal

¹ Regarded from this standpoint, there is even something a little childish in the *credo* of such an artist as Tagore (published in *Contemporary Indian Philosophy*, 1936). In spite of all the beauty and charm which he evokes for us one feels that the deeper powers of the soul are not drawn out by labour, however disciplined and conscientious, in recording the pure spiritual quality of experience, but by a more severe order of adaptation to reality which brings with it far less aesthetic rewards.

secretions, it is only the artist who can describe the effects of their activity in terms of character, value and life. To "explain" a personality is one thing; to depict him another. It is the sensitive observer alone who can present us with the "what" for which the man of science provides the "how".

With all this, however, we cannot live exclusively on the plane of the ideal. The passive acceptance of a majestic but largely incomprehensive drama cannot represent more than the first stage of man's imaginative relationship to the world. From response we must proceed to control. We must not permit ourselves to become so fascinated by the statue that we forget the pedestal on which it stands.

Sooner or later the developed individual, unless he has a very special avocation, will be compelled to accept the fact that the beautiful is something which he only encounters in this world by the way, and that the primary concern of anyone who is seriously awakened to spiritual realities is to labour at establishing those basic conditions which will render the emergence of truth, love and beauty possible. Such, at any rate, is the doctrine which is unambiguously declared in all the scriptures of the world—Jesus calling upon men to seek first the Kingdom of Heaven, the Buddha preaching the Four Noble Truths respecting release from suffering, Lao-Tse expounding the doctrine of the Simple Way—which are unanimous in exhorting man to go to the root of the matter and extirpate the seeds of evil from himself and the rest of humanity.

Intellectually, this means the relatively laborious scientific exploration of the constitution and structure of things in order that the more delightful and creative elements in life may not be at the mercy of the lower. As a result moralizing and sermonizing, the formulation of excessively abstract philosophical principles about behaviour, and the inspired guesses, the intuitive perceptions and superior insights of the artists and mystics amongst us, will increasingly give way to a more pedestrian investigation of the actual conditions and forces by which life is actually determined. The problem will, in fact, be transferred to the plane of the concrete. Imagination will be harnessed to practical research—as it is, indeed, in the work of an increasing number of thinkers today who understand the meaning of realism in the modern sense, and who are as a result conceiving of "creativity" in a more sober fashion than have so many sages and seers in the past.

One must emphasize, however, that the objective knowledge which will thus reinforce the results of more purely spiritual vision will not be limited to that acquired by the orthodox investigator in this field. It is not merely a question of translating the mystical to the plane of geography, economics, dietetics, eugenics and psychology. The true complement of spiritual realization is that higher

science which takes account of the finer cosmic forces which are at work in the universe around us.

We are led finally into the realm of the transcendental. Beyond the accepted disciplines there are others of a more advanced type which await our attention. There are causes of which even the more progressive scientist studies only the effects. There are times and seasons of spiritual activity, glimpsed uncertainly by the poets, but known with more precision by the students of the Mysteries. There are sources of benediction and sustenance, controlling powers, configurations, rhythms, attitudes and observances, by the proper use of which man can place himself in a creative relationship to that sphere of being to which he previously responded only in terms of aesthetic appreciation. Behind the poet there stands the more austere and illuminated personality of the hierophant who through an interior identification with the Light has united in his being responsiveness and understanding, who has progressed to that further point at which art and science are one. As an artist he experiences the wonder and glory of the whole; as a transcendental philosopher he has penetrated to the processes in which this radiance has its source. And as a result he holds in his hands those keys of life for which we are all seeking in our distress.

Morally, the acceptance of the objective aspect of being will lead the individual to forgo all manner of higher spiritual satisfactions for the sake of labour in a more subdued and responsible mood in the bare, ugly and desolate places, that a new world may be born. To the degree that a person deepens his consciousness in this direction he will become less inclined to express his realizations in terms of art creation alone. The Spirit will awaken within him a response to a more universal mode of being. He will be moved to give himself, primarily at least, to some work of a redemptive type, associated with creating the foundations of a new and acceptable social order. He will be ethically as well as aesthetically aroused. And he will begin to feel more and more uneasy at the idea of serving humanity exclusively as a recorder, in however accomplished terms, of the processes of life, and this even though in so doing he may exercise an impressive control over the realm of external form. Unless he really has a highly specialized function to perform he will be impelled to set his hand to the plough in a more radical manner.

In other words, the problems presented to us today in the social realm are so insistent and disturbing that they reveal at once the worth of an individual's artistic pretensions. If in the face of all the life-and-death struggles which are taking place in this field he is capable of continuing resolutely and serenely with some purely aesthetic task, then he is indeed a true artist with an authentic vocation, and has every claim to be respected and left alone.

But our economic and political situation reveals no less unmistakably the shallowness and moral weakness of those people who are merely playing at art. In the present age they very easily become the prey to deep misgivings and are impelled either to advance elaborate justifications for their activities or to make uneasy, and usually ill-considered, efforts to associate themselves with the cause of social reform. Not, of course, that a man's contribution to culture must be simply political *or* artistic in character. But the epoch is forcing us to discover the degree to which we can abstain without embarrassment from some form of collaboration with others to make a better world.

One can fairly safely assume that the indications today are in the direction of an increasing absorption of artistic activity in the wider processes of social creativeness. The age on which we are entering is not one of art creation in the traditional sense, but of creation in a more vital and spiritual mode—even though superficially the opposite may appear to be the truth. In other words, it is our destiny to realize in the medium of practical *action* all sorts of harmonies and rhythms which have so far been expressed for the most part in art forms alone. We shall create poems, pictures and symphonies in terms of human personalities, of incarnated beauty and order.

Finally, a response to the spiritual imposes a still further limitation upon subjectivism and individualism through the fact that it impels the seeker after spiritual fulfilment to submit to membership of a group. For the important principle is involved that just as when a person turns inwards he transcends the condition of separateness and comes into association with the Spirit which informs and unifies the whole, so also when he turns outwards again towards Nature he finds himself in a corresponding situation: that is to say, in a condition of interdependence with others who are also seeking to understand and control her forces.

In other words if you attune yourself inwardly to the One, you will be moved to express your inner condition by participating in some form of corporate activity in which the character of the One is reflected. For only the activity of a body of people who are dedicated to a common enterprise can properly express this order of inspiration. The contemplative who is really seeking to transcend separateness in the sphere of his inner being will be moved to transcend separateness also in the sphere of his outer activities. Hence the true mystic is impelled to express his personality as a member of a group of like-minded people. For he knows that in isolation he will sooner or later lose his inspiration and power.

Even apart, however, from such high metaphysical considerations it should be evident that in the era on which we are entering

people will find more and more that they are unable to receive any vital inspiration while they still attempt to work out their destiny in individualistic terms. They will be moved instead to join forces with others who are labouring in the same field, so that they can draw power from a common source of energy. The individual who is seeking to "plough a lonely furrow" will find in time that the inner springs of his spiritual life are beginning to dry up, that even though he may be deeply moved to serve society, and may console himself with the belief that he is interiorly in rapport with kindred souls all over the world, he is increasingly overpowered by a sense of loneliness, impotence and isolation.

For it is not difficult to perceive that the quest for truth is becoming more and more a collective enterprise. The days are past when a thinker could effectively gather up and express through his unique personality some particular aspect of reality, in the style, say, of the great nineteenth-century novelists.

We now feel that it is a presumption for an isolated individual, however gifted, to address himself to such venturesome enterprises. Too much knowledge has by this time been accumulated by research and experience which could be brought to bear upon the problem. There may still be room for straightforward, vivid, objective and highly personalized reporting. But the days are assuredly over when the man of genius can afford, in the manner of Coleridge or Carlyle, to set up as an inspired critic and interpreter of contemporary life. The undertaking is quite simply no longer a one-man job.

More and more as the years go on will illumination be imparted to the organically constituted group. It lies in the very nature of our highly organized and particularized modern knowledge that it can be acquired and expressed only by mutual collaboration. We have reached a point at which no individual working as such, however resourceful and talented he may be, can hope to compete with a body who are sharing their experience and bringing their common resources to bear upon it, even if they are less highly endowed. A time will surely come when even the highly individualized literary man will have to be prepared to contribute his insight and sensitiveness to the common activities of a group. But of this more in a later chapter.

5. *Dynamic Mysticism*

Inwardness, then, is acceptable only as the inner principle and condition of external activity. True mysticism ultimates inevitably in action. Admittedly such extraversion may not in certain cases be manifested on the more external plane, but action it will be nevertheless. There can be no other consequence of

attunement to that Infinite Consciousness which is continually manifesting its nature in the phenomenal world.

What, however, the positivists among us find it difficult to believe is that, given that we are committed to resolute action; the most effective way of achieving it lies in concentrating first and foremost on the Unseen. As a result the labours of the transcendental philosopher in this field are directed to persuading such thinkers that the inner, invisible world of Spirit, however remote and intangible it may appear to the "realist", is the potent force behind all external achievement. By concentrating on that which is seemingly farthest from the world of the senses the mystic can obtain a power over that world which completely defeats the calculations of the man of reason. The key lies at the very bottom of the well. Even a few seconds' genuine contact with the innermost planes of being can change a man's whole life and, through him, the lives of hosts of others.

In view of what has been said earlier on this theme there will be no need for me to stress the fact that such association with the unmanifested involves something very much more radical than a release of the potencies of the "unconscious" as the process is ordinarily understood by psychologists. It is a familiar fact that by permitting it to collaborate freely with the operations of the conscious mind all manner of physical and mental adjustments can be improved to an astonishing degree. We have all some acquaintance with the numberless manuals in circulation instructing us how to get the best results out of the capricious and unreliable apparatus on which we are dependent for our peace of mind, and all preaching in their different fashions the sound and radical gospel that "the secret is relaxation".

Trivial as many of these productions are, they are yet deeply symptomatic of our modern spiritual situation. For they represent the first phase of our realization that we have fallen into that fundamental error which I describe in these pages as phenomenalism. Paradoxically enough, it is by *inattention* that Doris improves her stroke at tennis, that Mabel acquires the social pose which she lacks, that Arthur learns to type with unwonted accuracy and speed, that Father again sleeps peacefully at nights. In other words, we are at last awakening to the fact that the key to control over the external world lies in directing the mind to something which lies behind the problem with which it is immediately confronted, that for effective adaptation there is demanded of us a dual submission to object and self.

But of course the process can be carried much further. We can open our souls to wider and nobler influences and—as a result, for instance, of a "successful" analysis, or a lesser religious conversion—attune our poor old neurotic personalities to the major social

rhythms. We then find ourselves thinking in different, more emancipated and universal terms. What analytical psychology described as the "reality principle" has triumphed. Our energies are claimed by art, social reform or science.

Yet all this, if the argument of the present work is valid, represents only the organization of a relatively superficial level of activity. We have spiritualized our experience—up to a certain point. But what we have achieved amounts only to a lesser order of sublimation. We may have eliminated certain regressive and anti-social tendencies, but it cannot be fairly said that the spiritual man within us has been truly awakened. If we wish to get to the root of the matter we must carry the process considerably farther. We must become informed by an order of life which is very far from being synonymous with "libido". We must drink at a fountain to which we can place our lips only at the price of renouncing even the highest personal satisfactions of the cultured and civilized individual, and the path to which lies by way of death and spiritual resurrection. In other words, true creation comes only out of the innermost depths within, depths which are not to be touched as a result of "psychological education" alone.

The essence of situation is that just as the outward aspect of creativeness is concentration upon all the numberless concrete facts to which we are called upon to relate ourselves exteriorly, its inward aspect is penetration to the more fundamental levels of one's own being. True creativeness comes only from the depths. We must hold fast to the insight that no external activity which is undertaken in disregard of the deeper interior realizations of the soul can ever, in spite of all appearances to the contrary, lead to anything but suffering, confusion, wastage, disorder and delusion. However ingenious the interpretations woven by the mind in its efforts to justify conduct, the stern fact remains that what comes out of the innermost makes for love, life and liberty, and that all enterprises which have their source in any lower inspiration will in the end prove to be delusive. The key to true freedom and expression, therefore, is the most profound possible responsiveness to the Spirit within. And its intimations will always challenge the conclusions of the rationalistic mind.

Hence the true mystic may be described as the person who preserves an unremitting faith and confidence in the Within on a plane on which the less enlightened are prone to weaken, hesitate or even deny their own vision. Mystical education is education in listening-in to inner spiritual admonitions to which the great majority are still deaf, and which for a long season may appear to the conscious mind as being completely unfounded and unjustified. And they involve also, as I have suggested earlier, a far deeper penetration through the mists of illusion than do the insights

promoted by "analysis". But in the end, however unfruitful or unintelligible their apparent consequences, they are seen to be of the order of spiritual wisdom.

What it comes to is that we have to acquire a far deeper understanding of what is known in spiritual philosophy as "influx". There is a science of inspiration, just as there is a science of objective facts. The range of spiritual influences which are inwardly accessible to us is no less extensive than the range of phenomena which are presented to our physical senses. And the art of controlling and transforming life in its deepest mode is that of conjoining the inmost aspects of the universe, which are essentially personal, with its outer aspects, which are material—or which at least appear to us to be such. In other words the activity of the heart has to be associated with that of the head in the most intimate and arcane fashion.

The process which is involved is essentially mysterious. All one can say is that we succeed in placing our thinking as it were within a zone of inner transcendental life, within which its creations assume a potent and harmonious character. Form is defined and clarified by the intensification of Substance. A Presence is invoked under the silent benediction of which the significant and revealing shapes appear. The Voice speaks decisively out of the depths of the silence within. Action is perfected by the completeness of the relaxation by which it is engendered. The basis of creative differentiation is immersion in the all-potent Void.

And since the interior essences of which I am here speaking are modes of personality, this means again that in order to bring about such an inflow from the depths of the Within we must not only attune ourselves inwardly to that supreme Consciousness in which all things have their source, but also deepen our association with all sorts of transcendental sources of power, on harmony with which our capacity to act as human beings depends—whether we suspect the fact or not. It is not simply a question of opening ourselves up to Spirit in general, but of polarizing ourselves to invisible cosmic forces and of deepening our links with personalities beyond the Veil with whom we are in a relation of intimacy and interdependence—a principle of fundamental importance to which I shall return in the final chapter of this book.

But what has been realized within must be expressed also without. The Centre must be united with the Periphery. What does this reconciliation imply?

Firstly, the person who is seeking to achieve such a synthesis must evidently have developed both the negative and the positive sides of his nature, and this not only to an adequate degree, but in balanced proportion.

That is to say, he must be able to surrender to the claims of

everything—the basic feminine excellence—while yet, in the ruthless masculine mode, reducing the universe at any given instant to the one point on which he is focusing his powers. For the operation is veritably one of life and death. The mind must be open to all possible vistas without being paralysed by their infinity. And it must be fiercely and uncompromisingly concentrated upon a vital undertaking without the saving and universalizing background being lost in the process. The ideal is localization without limitation.

And not only must the individual resist distraction in this fashion in the external realm; he must also remain sensitive to the inspiration reaching his soul from within. A command is gained over the situation by preserving oneself in a condition of static calm and indifference which, however, if it is achieved in the proper manner, has the paradoxical effect of enhancing enormously one's performance on the physical plane. Although the attention is concentrated with great intensity upon that which is before one, determination is essentially from within.

This condition is, of course, known to all inspired men of action and to every creative artist—although its deeper mystical implications are usually veiled from their eyes. It must always be somehow as if one were not really engaged in the operation. Then it will be successful. One secures one's end by a sort of subtle inadvertence. But the fact must be emphasized that this state of mind can be carried to a more advanced stage only if certain spiritual disciplines are followed.

Without them the Innermost and the Outermost can never be effectively brought into association. For while response to the spiritual within makes inevitably for disinterestedness, altruism, asceticism and "otherworldliness" generally, resolute objectivity is associated all too evidently with powerful egoistic feelings: possessiveness, violence, vanity, sensationalism. Hence the individual who is seeking to unite the inner with the outer aspects of existence is presented with the task of making the gestures of the passionate and the desire-bound, while yet rejecting all the satisfactions which are associated with their power of objective concentration.

This condition is known in the West as "disinterestedness" and in the East by the more precise term of "non-attachment". The point to bear in mind about it is that it is *not* one of "detachment" in the merely superficial sense of not being implicated. What it implies psychologically is being deeply involved on the spiritual plane while yet being free from entanglement in the toils of desire. And metaphysically it entails a complete submission to the divine activity within the soul, yet at the same time its direction outwards by a responsible and objectively-minded personality. The aspirant thus becomes a Janus-faced being, his gaze watchfully turned both inwards and outwards at once, in a perfect

equipoise of being—just as a pianist will strike chords with a positive gesture and give a performance which is in a real sense his own while yet remaining unremittingly sensitive, as a condition of his achievement, to a directing inspiration with which it would be fatal for him to lose touch.

And when this difficult synthesis has at last been accomplished he enters into a state of mind in which action and contemplation have become one. It is not simply a question of alternating between two different states. For one lies within the other. To act creatively is to participate in the dynamic life of the All. The mystic learns to know this life in the silence within, on the plane of contemplation and prayer, in a negative mode. But the complement to that condition is a going forth into the manifested while still remaining within the holy sphere of the Presence. The result is that all such activity is invested with a wonderful peace and stillness, so that although our minds are concentrated upon the periphery we remain all the time established in immutable calm at the Centre. In spite of all the swift and surprising changes in the pattern, we perceive it against the majestic background of the Unchanging, which is, indeed, its innermost aspect. The dynamic is subordinated to the static in which it is enfolded.

CHAPTER TWO

THOUGHT AND BEING

IN our relations with the world of space and time our ideal must be intense activity regulated from the mystical, ~~changeless~~ centre of the Tao. This, it will be plain, involves something more radical than the preservation of an inward peace which enables us to maintain our activities on the plane of a more conventional existence. There may indeed be a true mystic in the heart of the individual who contrives to remain inwardly "above the battle" while plunged outwardly in the turmoil of mundane affairs. But this evidently represents only the first phase of such an indwelling. It is not the function of mysticism to energize our more philistine undertakings; it finds a true outer expression only when it imposes upon life deeper rhythms, new orientations, adaptations which express conformity to a more interior order than that of which we are normally aware. Matter must become truly *ensouled*—and this can only mean that thought and action fall into more subtle and profound patterns, become responsive to the interior influence of an indwelling Life.

I. *Heart and Head*

In order to gain some notion of how all this will work out we must begin with the mind itself and consider the changes in our mental processes which result from the awakening of the mystical principle within the soul.

Here it is important to bear in mind that the principle of Sophia is essentially *feminine*. Hence its operation has in every direction the effect of overcoming unreal distinctions, reconciling opposites, synthesizing disintegrated elements, sensitizing the soul generally to the Whole. For mysticism—and it is always towards mysticism that the influence of Sophia impels us—all is fundamentally one, however sharply multiform it may be in manifestation just on that account. And the ideal which it sets before us is that of perceiving all the diversified forms which we see around us as embraced in a unity. This, again, means raising our souls from the plane of matter to that of Spirit. Separation is assigned to its proper place on the periphery of existence, otherness overcome by imaginative identification, the finite dissolved in the Infinite.

What this makes for first and foremost is *interior understanding*. This means that the accent is laid upon states rather than places, upon invocation rather than evocation, upon influx rather than external manipulation, in general upon the indwelling life rather than upon the vehicle in which it is contained. In other words, the individual comes to realize that through the channels of intuition, inspiration and seership he can gain an absolutely satisfying and reliable experience of reality, and one which is far more revealing than that acquired by scientific investigation alone. Truth is then no longer arrived at by the laborious analysis of the external features of the situation; it is directly registered by the spirit.

Nor shall we be saved in this matter by a timidly cautious policy of "safety first", according to which we must never venture on a step forward until our credentials have been duly inspected by science. For although many apprehensions in this field can be subsequently confirmed by ordinary research, most of them are out of range of such verification. What is more, it is just these last which have the greatest significance for our spiritual welfare. Hence our only hope lies in learning to awaken and discipline our capacities in this field just as we have in that of our more familiar knowledge. As I have repeatedly insisted throughout this essay, we cannot expect to control life by the use of our lower faculties alone.

In considering the possibilities of intuitive understanding it is essential to realize that the consciousness of the mystic is centred, not in the "head", but in the "heart". This, it may be remarked,

is very much more than a merely figurative statement—for those, at least, who have any understanding of the occult constitution of man. If there is no accepted term available to describe this re-orientation, the fact only affords a significant indication of the degree to which our nomenclature has been built up in the service of a rationalistic type of consciousness. However, provided that there is a clear understanding of the mental process to which it refers, any word will serve. Whether we describe such understanding as “gnosis”, the “inner light”, or “intuition” is from this point of view unimportant. The fact to hold steadily in mind is that we mean by it an understanding from within.

Nevertheless, there are certain designations for such apprehension which are positively misleading. Thus, the person who announces that in these matters he goes by his “feelings” rather than by “reason” is particularly liable to create misunderstanding, even though the phrase may serve his own purposes well enough. To begin with, he suggests thereby that one process is a substitute for the other, which it evidently is not. And in any case he is describing the situation in unduly loose terms. For the actual fact is that since that which he perceives, although definite, is too subtle to be described in ordinary categories of thought, he registers its character in his mind by attending to the emotions which it awakens within him. That is to say, he responds directly to that which an elaborate analysis of the problem, could it be carried out, would ideally disclose.

All this, it must be emphasized, does not involve any attempt to dispense with the operation of “reason”. What is involved is that the “heart” exercises its function of orienting our more external “head” knowledge from within. It does not supersede that knowledge or render it superfluous, but it brings it into relation with deeper levels of reality. Reason conflicts with intuition only when it is regarded as being complete in itself and as implying the unreality of that which lies beyond it. “Heart” understanding corrects materialism and phenomenalism by awakening the spirit to the more inward and fundamental aspects of the problem. It gives the external facts a deeper and more revealing orientation, by placing them within a wider system of relationships.

The first effect of this determination by the feminine principle is the introduction of peace and harmony into the world of thought of the typically masculine thinker. As a result of this inner relaxation of being a check is imposed upon his native tendency towards egotism, disputatiousness, intolerance and arbitrary logical simplification.

For the male of the species is deeply and essentially a formalist, and it lies in the nature of all formal thinking that propositions

inevitably assume an absolute character, excluding all competing possibilities. The more vigorously and cogently an idea is formulated, the more difficult does it become to believe that the alternatives to it have any serious claims upon our attention. Definition exercises a sort of hypnotic effect upon the mind, leading us to conclude that what is really only a facet or aspect of truth has an exclusive value and a universal application. And then the fatal situation is reached that instead of thought performing its proper function in articulating experience, experience itself begins to be moulded by the conceptions which have been forged to express it, with the result that all possibilities of creative living are lost.

And in the opposite direction his native urge towards action impels the masculine thinker to simplify the problem before him so that he may be provided with a clear and satisfying form through which he can release his emotions. For libido can only discharge itself unimpeded on this or any other plane if the mind is free from doubts and misgivings. A clear and unambiguous formula therefore means relief for the soul. And the more base are the emotions which are seeking expression, the more base also will be the symbols through which they are released. As the Nazis have shown the world, it is the grossest passions which impel us to the crudest simplifications.

As a result of the operation of both these factors male thinking tends always to become power thinking; it is characterized by a competition between rival affirmations. The very constitution of a man's mind leads him to believe he is right, to adopt and find satisfaction in some clear-cut, positive point of view, which necessarily conflicts with others assumed by equally determined mental egoists, the consequence being everlasting and unproductive controversy, argument and contention. And the condition can be overcome only by an infusion into the soul of the feminine consciousness of unity and totality, the consciousness that all divisions (not distinctions, however) are illusory, the mystical sense that essentially everything is interfused with and determined by everything else.

In other words, man has to learn, under this gentle inspiration, to transcend the limits of his egoism, and to surrender to the claims of other personalities who are affirming no less valid aspects of truth. He has to acquire the faculty of projecting himself imaginatively into the minds of others whom he previously thought of as "opponents", or as having fallen into this or that dangerous "heresy" or "error". And for a real male, whose basic impulse is to dominate the intellectual situation before him at all costs, this is indeed a severe ordeal, demanding many years of patient discipline and sacrifice. And it is a notable fact that in this matter it is to the feminine East that we naturally look for inspiration,

where tolerance—even though it has at times a somewhat listless quality—is practised to a degree which may well make the Occidental ashamed. True, we have in western science a remarkable exhibition of man's self-effacement before a challenging cosmos. But submission to Nature is by no means the same thing as submission to another human personality!

Mysticism again makes necessarily for the transcendence of separateness. And here we have to reckon again with the two types of relation already discussed earlier. That is to say, the mystical thinker is first of all moved to establish with others that "vertical" I-Thou association which provides the key to intensive understanding, while in the extensive mode he becomes capable of contemplating the phenomenal world in terms of unity. The soul is as a result at once more conscious of its individuality and of its place within the Whole. This will throw some light on the fact that in the present epoch, in which the subtle and reconciling influence of Wisdom is at last beginning to penetrate our thinking, we are developing an increasing sensitiveness both to the personal element in experience (characterology, vocational guidance, etc.) and to the factor of the organic (neo-vitalism, liaison, internationalism, etc.).

As to the first of these modes of realization, in which the individual is inspired to achieve a true identification with that which is before him, it is most simply and adequately described as Love, that process by which we bridge the chasm which divides subjective from objective being and enter the realm of mystical unity. But it has also a very definite intellectual aspect, for although the process involved is essentially feminine, it entails the overcoming—in the case of the sophisticated at least—of a complex of elaborate mental obstacles. For in order properly to experience individuality we have to resist a powerful initial tendency to think of every object, in the masculine mode, in terms of class membership—first "the servant", and then only "Jane". Only intense and discriminating sympathy can effectively convert "a" into "this". But all this belongs to psychology, and I will say nothing further regarding it here.

With respect to the individual's relation to the extensive world, the activity of Sophia within him finds expression first of all in rendering thought a function of being. All mystical disciplines are based upon the principle that if a certain inner condition of soul can be effectively established creative thought and action will automatically follow as a result. In other words, thinking must be organic. Every situation must be evaluated only as it presents itself to the whole man, all of whose powers are brought harmoniously to bear upon it. Everything must be experienced as it exists equally for the heart, the mind and the will.

2. *The Meaning of Vision*

It will be clear that this principle brings with it a serious threat to anything in the nature of unproductive intellectualism. Truth comes essentially out of *singleness*. And in this connection it is a significant fact that at each end of the scale experience is simple, intelligible, convincing and easy to handle and describe. Both the world of the primitive and the deeper inner world of the mystic can be dealt with in terms of distinct and basic images.

When, however, we enter the thought sphere of the Intellectual we become involved at once with an inordinate amount of uncertainties and complexities—and this for the straightforward reason that he has not yet completed the absolutely essential process of resimplifying his personality. If he either returned to the elemental (which is actually impossible) or pressed forward into the realm of the spiritual, his difficulties would gradually disappear and he would again find himself thinking in an organic mode. The high-brow is essentially the person who is trying to rationalize a transitional situation—with consequences of which we are all only too well aware.

The first effect of an interior quickening is that the mind is discouraged in its tendency to disperse its activities in the field of unproductive speculation. On more ordinary levels this corrective is provided, of course, by the economy, sobriety and restraint of classicism. But we must recognize also that when we become concerned with the deeper life of the spirit the limitations imposed upon intellectual activity become even more severe. For we find ourselves in a field in which, on the one hand, speculation becomes a far more hazardous affair than it is in other provinces of thought, and on the other, the temptation to embark upon fascinating and unsound interpretations and evaluations is exceptionally strong. The effect is, therefore, that the intellectual who has become interested in religion, unless he has given his allegiance to some narrowly traditional faith, can scarcely resist the impulse to establish all manner of suggestive and interesting correlations between such elements as, say, socialism, primordial psychic images, Gothic architecture, the *chakras*, serialism, the Laws of Manu, aristocracy, sex, the Tarot Cards, and Heaven knows what else.

But such speculations are as premature as they are over-ambitious. For we are in a realm in which the restless and inquisitive intellectual will never succeed in orienting himself with any success. His researches are certainly of considerable significance in so far as they reflect the fact that we are confronted with the task of crea-

ting a far wider synthesis than traditionalism has to offer us. But at the same time it is also plain that illumination in this field can be imparted only to those who are concerning themselves with the study of the Mysteries in a very much more sober and responsible sense. Until that point is reached the individual will achieve nothing more than the creation of a complex of truth and error which, even though it necessarily derives a certain glamour from the nature of its subject-matter, leaves the reader in the end fundamentally disappointed.

The stern principle must be accepted that once a person dedicates himself seriously to the pursuit of truth in this field he must be prepared to forgo for a long period the gratification of his intellectual appetites. For until he has really *found himself* spiritually in a very definite sense, all his attempts at exposition and interpretation will reflect the essentially delusive and bewildering character of the region of being which he is traversing in his search for light.

Hence the need for a high degree of intellectual abstemiousness. For in this realm nothing can be truly apprehended unless it is apprehended from within. The individual is given, in fact, only that which he really *needs* to know—as opposed to that which merely satisfies his intellectual appetites. That facile and more external assimilation of knowledge which is so freely invited by our modern culture has little significance for the soul which is seriously seeking to achieve self-realization. Truth—as opposed to what one must describe by contrast as information—must now be cognized only in conjunction with deep interior processes of growth. Hence but little is garnered. Yet whatever is acquired in this fashion and at this cost is truly appropriated, and can fairly be characterized as real knowledge—in a sense in which but few today understand the term. Once again we are brought back to the principle that truth is disclosed only when subjective and objective are properly correlated.

The outcome is true insight, which implies again a remarkable process of simplification. Something deeper than the ordinary mind—the inner self in communion with the Universal Spirit—quicken in the individual a clear and powerful consciousness of essentials, with the result that a whole complex of laborious computations are simply dispensed with as unproductive and unnecessary. The person responds to the more profound conditions which underlie that realm of appearances on which the attention of the rationalizing mind is concentrated. He becomes sensitive to the latent, the incipient, the more decisive factors in the equation. Hence what appears on occasion to be prophetic vision, but which is really only a more discerning selection amongst the data before his mind.

There is no magic about such a mode of apprehension. It may at times practically amount to seership. But essentially it is the effect of disregarding, through a purified inspiration, all that complex of data which, although they engage the attention of the unimaginitive analyst, are not of really vital significance. A wide range of facts may be perceived, but the essentials stand out decisively, while the soul in contemplating them is filled with a complete conviction that the mind is functioning on a higher level than it is able to do normally.

The mystic responds directly to the heart of the situation before him. He feels immediately within his own being the presence or absence of Light in any given contingency, and only secondarily controls it in terms of empiricism and analysis. For he recognizes more or less clearly that the "facts" of the case represent really so many particles of objectivity which are caught up and centred in a spiritual whirlpool the character of which can be directly and reliably registered by the trained faculties of the soul. In a word, he responds to essences rather than to externalizations, to states rather than to the phenomena which they precipitate, and is thus, one may urge, relating himself to Reality in a more intimate and natural fashion than is the rationalist who is engaged only with the sphere of repercussions and effects.

All true understanding demands a relaxation of egoism. The attention of the separated, self-centred ego is concentrated upon the plane of form, upon that plane on which we are more conscious of distinctions than of the unity in which they are transcended. Hence between rationalism and egoism there is a deep and inevitable association. And such rationalism is overcome only by a quickening of the spiritual nature, the tendency of which is to overcome external differences by a process of imaginative identification. The head standardizes the situation; the heart individualizes it.

All distinctions are at the bottom misleading and unreal. By separating things from one another we deny a more profound order of realization: that All is One. Yet it is our destiny to live forever in the realm of manifestation and differentiation. And here we cannot dispense with dichotomies and analyses. All that remains open to us is to employ concepts without being bound by them. The heart must be forever active in preserving us from regarding them as ultimate. And it is a matter of clinical experience that when the heart fails the consciousness becomes overpowered by the distinctions which it is manipulating.

The Unity is within. He who, from whatever point on the periphery he may be standing, has achieved contact with the Centre will be fundamentally in harmony with all other forms of the divine life. As I gradually attune myself to the one Self I unfold

the capacity to understand the manifestations of that Self in my fellow-men. There is one Universal Man in all, and accessible to all. The mystic within every man can communicate with the mystic in every other. The divine—and the divine alone—answers to the divine.

Working in dissociation from the deeper consciousness, the intellect invariably begets an infinity of misunderstandings and misrepresentations which make one despair of the possibilities of universal communication. But when we learn to respond to the heart, which moves us always to achieve unity at the roots, we are provided with a foundation on which we can safely build. All attempts to begin at the other end with merely intellectual transactions only invite disaster. My workaday personality, determined as it is by the interaction of all manner of racial and social influences, can only with great difficulty negotiate with yours, which is similarly conditioned. But the Spirit which is one within us can eventually bring us into unity if we have the patience to submit to its inspiration. And then, by a miracle, we shall see our respective idiosyncrasies within the framework of an inclusive whole. By Its informing presence the One resolves the divisively separated into the creatively distinct.

3. *The Modern Hypatia*

In all the foregoing we have been concerned essentially with the feminization of masculine thought. And it will be obvious that in this process of re-education women themselves will have an important part to play.

Our increasing interest in more inward modes of experience, even though it involves the interior life of both the sexes, cannot but have a very close bearing upon the character of woman's contribution to culture. For she is by nature more attuned to this realm of being than is the extraverted male.

Her distinctive strength lies in the fact that, as is indicated by all manner of symbols, allegories and myths, it is given to her to come into a wonderfully free and immediate association with the inner realms of being, either directly by the subjective path, or objectively through the medium of the senses. Heaven is accessible to her in a way that it is not accessible to man, who tends ever to be bound by the object, and whose mind as a result is ever bent upon measuring, controlling and manipulating those more external conditions of life on which the enjoyment of our more subtle satisfactions depends. Love, sympathy, and their outcome, intuition, carry her easily and surely into that magic and real world which

lies within the outward forms of existence. She is impelled to accept or reject what is before her, not in the light of general principles, but in virtue of a "pure recognition of quality. She communicates directly with the inner spirit of what is presented to her, responding to essences, rather than to the features which objects possess on account of their place in a wider system or scheme. In a word, she is constitutionally attuned to the infinite Within.

We must conclude, therefore, that woman is destined to play an increasingly prominent part in the process of spiritual orientation which we are here discussing. Yet although there is evidence enough that the contribution which she is making is steadily becoming more important, it must be admitted that there is still not a great deal to claim our attention in this realm. In view of the fact that the intellectual field has now for so long been dominated by the rationalizing male this is, after all, comprehensible enough. Even the impulse to that feminization of our consciousness of which we are today witnesses is almost entirely due to the initiative of masculine thinkers. Practically all the outstanding pioneer work in opening up the great world of the "unconscious" has so far been performed by men, and this both in the fields of philosophy, psychology and literature; one need only mention such names as those of Janet, Freud, Adler, Jung, William James, F. W. H. Myers, Bergson and Keyserling. For we have to recognize that in many nominally masculine personalities there can exist a large measure of femininity. And when a man is endowed with this order of sensitiveness he enjoys the additional advantage of being able to express his realizations through the positive male intelligence, which is notably powerful in exposition.

Yet with all this it is evident that women are giving increasing expression to their specific and no less important mode of experiencing life. And this necessarily impels them to some sort of revolt against tradition. Until about the turn of the century our intellectual conceptions and principles were to an almost fantastic degree man-made. Theology was a typical masculine creation, and although the significance of woman's experience of religion was duly recognized, it was assumed without question that it should find expression in the form of piety, devotion and service, the typical conventual qualities. As for science and philosophy, they were regarded, quite simply, as provinces of thought which were created by and reserved for men, in which they displayed their characteristic talents. And the situation was much the same in the realm of action and affairs.

The subsequent emancipation of women and their steady penetration into every department of life is already a matter of past history: we now simply take it for granted that the whole

picture has radically altered. But we have not yet, I would suggest, fully awakened to the potentialities of this momentous development. The more obvious social changes which are taking place in this direction are apparent enough to us, but we are still not properly alive to the deeper aspect of this revolution, which is making for the transformation of our whole approach to Reality.

For we are faced with the significant fact that woman is at last beginning to become aware of the higher possibilities of her own consciousness. True, for many years past she has expressed herself with great freedom in various intellectual fields, and most characteristically and successfully, of course, in that of imaginative literature, where her remarkable sensitiveness to personal relations finds the fullest expression. But it is only in very recent years, it would appear, that she has seriously sat down and examined what may be described as the philosophical aspect of the problem—considered, I mean, the specific nature of her own awareness, and its relation to that of man.

And the results are extremely interesting. For women are becoming conscious of the need to think in their own way, to liberate themselves from the masculine intellectual tyranny to which they have so long been subjected in this field. Naturally, the first effect of this revolt is that every woman who is in the least imaginative recoils with dismay from the spectacle presented by those of her sisters whose efforts are devoted to a monkey-like imitation of masculine performance in the intellectual field. The results—unless we have to do with rare individuals in whom the normal characteristics of the sexes are reversed—are always, as is inevitably the case with merely derivative manifestations, disappointing; the real personality is actually repressed, and what we are presented with is nothing much more than the mechanical result of uncritical submission to a masculine scheme of thought—work in which conscientiousness and reliability remain unredeemed by that vigour and severity which make the products of the male mind what they are.

Rejecting this passive acceptance of masculine standards and conventions, woman is today rightly enough concerned to express her distinctive realizations in her own appropriate way. But here she comes up against the serious obstacle that in her attempts to register and express her typical experience—which, one must insist, is essentially inward and trans-rational—she finds that she is thwarted at every point by a system of man-made conceptions and categories which come fatally between her and her deeper realizations. As will appear later, the operations of her imagination are continually frustrated by excessively formal and rigid ideas which, for all their symmetry and plausibility, serve only, as she

sees the matter, to distort the experience which they are designed to articulate.¹

We meet therefore with the significant fact that women writers are beginning to appear amongst us who consciously set out to challenge the masculine distortion of truth. The results, as we should expect, are often disappointing, for the sufficient reason that any manifestation which is of the order of a protest or a reaction, however justified it may be, is bound to fall short of philosophical balance and sobriety. But this does not by any means do away with the importance of such manifestations. The fact remains that these pioneers are making their contributions to a new way of thinking, which is bound to acquire increasing ascendancy with the progress of the century, and which will be distinguished by the fact that the operations of reason are interiorly directed by those of intuition. The head will at last become subject to the heart, thought integrated with feeling, the general imaginatively reconciled with the particular.

There are, of course, numbers of outstanding women writers who criticize the masculine attitude to experience *implicitly* by their imaginative creations in the field of art. But there are beginning also to appear here and there others who are consciously and deliberately challenging masculine standards and values, and their work is clearly of great potential importance.

Of great importance from this point of view is Dorothy Richardson's *Pilgrimage*, considered not only as a notable achievement in the field of art, but from the standpoint of its really formidable challenge to masculine ideology. For the author not only possesses an almost uncanny capacity for initiating us into the depths of the feminine consciousness, but she is also equipped with intellectual powers which enable her to hold her own with ease with the typical masculine thinker. One may safely assert that as we gradually become more sensitive to the significance of inward, intuitive understanding, *Pilgrimage* will become increasingly important for all serious students of this question.²

¹ "Women know that something is wrong, but they are still new in the world of intellectual development and up to the present have been mainly occupied with the mistaken business of trying to play the game as men play it, and of trying to do what is expected of young persons who are emancipated and educated. They have adopted masculine habits, as a guest adopts the ways of his host, and have been very statistical and objective, thus sacrificing their most valuable gift and undergoing amputation of the soul. . . ."

"But somehow the women not yet come into being must find a way of restoring to a baffled and bungled world the balance and invigoration of a developed female consciousness. This may happen rapidly, if once women can emerge from the first blundering attempt to adapt to the male order of mind, and can realize that there are great sectors of human consciousness in which the female mind is not only more at home than the male mind, but which demand *primarily* female thinking, and cannot possibly keep pace without it." Dr. William H. Sheldon, *Psychology and the Promethean Will* (1936), pp. 190-1.

² Mention must be made also of a remarkable document entitled *An Account*, by Erica Cotterill, privately printed in 1916 and continued in *Letters to Bernard Shaw*. See also her *Form of Diary* (The Pushkin Press, 1939).

Nor amongst earlier documents must we forget *The Perfect Way*, written by Anna

Apart from this major achievement, it is interesting to observe all sorts of indications that the revolt against "masculine thinking" is already in progress. And here I would refer to a most interesting and charmingly written study entitled *A Life of One's Own* (1934), by Joanna Field, in which the author gives an account of an experiment which she made over several years in carrying out what can only be described as a process of de-intellectualization. The following extracts indicate clearly enough the importance of her findings from the point of view of our present enquiry:

I discovered that there is all the difference in the world between knowing something intellectually and knowing it as a "lived" experience. This is a truism but none the less of vital importance. The more I read scientific books on psychology the more I felt that the essential facts of experience were being missed out. In order to show how far it is possible to handle ideas with apparent competence and yet be utterly at sea in trying to live one's knowledge, I would like the reader to bear in mind when reading the first few chapters that I had a First Class Honours Degree in Psychology, and was also, during the time of this experiment, earning my living by applying my so-called psychological knowledge to others, in lecturing, research and other ways. . . .

There was a narrow focus which meant seeing life as if from blinkers and with the centre of awareness in my head: and there was a wide focus which meant knowing with the whole of my body, a way of looking which quite altered my perception of whatever I saw. And I found that the narrow focus was the way of reason. If one was in the habit of arguing about life it was very difficult not to approach sensation with the same concentrated attention and so shut out its width and depth and height. But it was the wide focus way which made me happy. . . .

I had unknowingly assumed that the only desirable way to live was a male way. I had tried to live a male life of objective understanding and achievement. Always, however, I have felt that this was not what really mattered to me, and as soon as I tried to question my experience I began to discover impulses towards a different attitude, impulses which eventually led me to find out the meaning of my own femininity. . . .

Most of the people I knew (both men and women) had made a cult of the male intellect, that is of objective reasoning as against subjective intuition. I had apparently been submissive

¹ingsford with the collaboration of Edward Maitland. In spite of the pretentiousness with which the claims of the feminine principle are defended in many passages, it remains one of the most important pioneer works in this field.

towards this fashion and accepted its assumption that logical symbols were real and anything else only "wish-fulfilment". So I had for years struggled to talk an intellectual language which for me was barren, struggled to force the feelings of my relation to the universe into terms that would not fit. For I had not understood at all that a feminine attitude to the universe was really just as legitimate, intellectually and biologically, as a masculine one; only, because it had never yet been properly understood and had certainly not understood itself, it had always tended to give to its mythological and religious symbols a special reverence and validity.

We may expect also that woman's attitude to experience will in course of time greatly modify our treatment of psychological problems, so that our methods in this field will become more and more consonant with the character of the problem which we are investigating. What I mean quite simply is this: The pioneers of analytical psychology were men of science. Their researches led them to recognizing beneath the crust of our rationalizations the existence of a dark, mysterious, irrational, subjective realm of inner being by which all the outer processes of our thought are conditioned. But their way of treating the subject remained fundamentally masculine (although, of course, every student of these questions must have a good deal of the woman in his constitution). The fiction had to be maintained that the obscure, mystical realm which lies below the plane of science could be controlled by science itself. Now, however, we may come to witness the development of an approach to the feminine realm which is itself feminine in character—in other words more intuitive, inspirational and aesthetic. And here the work done by women—or by men of the feminine type—will obviously be of crucial importance.

That women are likely to excel in psychological analysis of the more formal and scientific order is not, of course, to be expected. The more abstract treatment of the problems of human behaviour is one which must appropriately be left to the masculine genius. Science is concerned naturally with the structure of things and is essentially a male activity. Hence we find that the typical and most valuable contributions of the feminine mind in this field lies in sensitiveness to the actual flow of life between human beings from moment to moment. For the general principles involved in a neurosis we turn naturally to the masculine expert. But for control over the elusive and transient communication between one person and another, for registration of the continual fluctuations in the psychic atmosphere generated by human association, we turn no less appropriately to the woman, who is by her very nature plunged into the stream of experience in a way in which a man is not.

Obviously this aspect of psychological truth is no less important than the other. And no less obviously it is a mode of art rather than of science. Under this feminine inspiration life's difficulties are interpreted and corrected in the present tense. Truth is discerned by direct inspection and intuition, as embodied in the transient situation. And healing and guidance flow out from the personality as a result of an imaginative response to the immediate. The word is more effectively spoken than written—and even if it is written it will consist, in the feminine style, in the evocation of living moments from the past.

Important, however, as woman's work in this field may be, we must recognize that her distinctive powers are expressed on the most lofty plane of all when she reaches the point of fulfilling her role as the priestess of Isis, the inspired initiatrix into the Unseen. For spiritually she is so constituted that if she can only rise to her higher possibilities she can come into communion with the world of Spirit and know directly what the masculine soul can grasp only with far greater difficulty (although with impressive power) in terms of external forms and figures. Woman here enters into her heritage as an embodiment of the feminine principle of Sophia, displaying that spiritual intuition on guidance by which reason is so completely dependent for the perfection of its operations.

From this point of view it is surely of no little significance that in so many modern spiritual movements the part which is played by women is far more prominent than that which has been grudgingly allowed to them under the historical masculine dispensation in which she figured principally as a "temptation" to the God-aspiring male, or as an inferior type of personality whose function in the spiritual economy was merely ancillary.

With all this, however, it is essential not to lose sight of the fact that we are concerned with the manifestation of an intuitive consciousness both in woman and man. And here we must give full recognition to the fact—registered by our intuitions, and recognized today to an increasing degree by psychologists—that the sharp division of humanity into two sexes, one incarnated in male and the other in female bodies, fails completely to meet the complex realities of the case. The truth is that, however definite may be the purely physiological differentiation involved, from the psychological standpoint we have to consider human beings as being essentially dualistic in their constitution. In the case of one sex the male principle is dominant, in the other it is recessive. This principle was affirmed earlier in the century in the unbalanced but deeply suggestive pioneer study of Otto Weininger, and it is now being developed in a most interesting fashion by Jung, with his well-known conception of the *animus* and the *anima*. And one

may add that in doing so he is only reviving an ancient mystical doctrine, references to which may be found scattered through the appropriate literature.

It may be suggested also that the crude distinction between the powerful, dominating male and the weak submissive female is itself a typical creation of the arrogant masculine consciousness, involving at once a denial of the secret and interior springs of inspiration, gentleness and purity within the soul of the man, and of the energy and rationality by which the woman's virtues are compensated. Now that we are conceiving the whole question in a more imaginative spirit we find this way of thinking quite inadequate to the realities of the case. Instead we are impelled to work out the problem in terms of the degree to which, in either sex, one of these elements preponderates over the other.

And here we have to consider the very interesting case of the individual in whom the balance between positive and negative, male and female, is nearly or fully equal: the androgyne. We have to reckon with the possibility—hinted at again in mystical literature—that as humanity advances spiritually its more progressive representatives will unite within themselves the characteristics of both sexes to an increasing degree. And it is certainly significant that even today both the unduly aggressive male and the excessively timid and helpless female are already regarded by us as types of undeveloped personality.

One thing at least is plain. The only people who can be expected to throw any real light upon the extraordinarily difficult and subtle problem to which we are today so evidently committed, of reconciling masculine rationalism with feminine mysticism, will be those comparatively rare personalities amongst us who are capable of uniting logic with love, reason with intuition, understanding of form with response to substance, and extensive with intensive apprehension.

Equilibrium of this order is so exceptional, and so precariously achieved, that the majority of those who have potentialities in this direction tend to break down readily in one respect or another, whether it is a question of diffuseness, romantic confusion, neuroticism, morbid mysticism or sexual perversity. But such failures must not blind our eyes to the fact that reconciliation in this realm constitutes the central problem of our time. Unless the head is wedded to the heart, and in the most intimate possible fashion, we are indeed lost.

CHAPTER THREE

TRANSITION AND TRANSVALUATION

IN the last chapter we were concerned with the psychological aspect of mystically oriented thought. We must now consider its content: the new system of relationships which discloses itself to the mind which has emancipated itself from bondage to masculine rationalism.

Clearly we have here a theme which demands several volumes to itself. For it would commit us to reviewing every phase of "advanced" thought with which we are confronted in this transitional and bewildering phase of our civilization. Earlier in this work I have touched upon some of the transformations and revaluations which would result from thinking in interior rather than exterior terms.¹ But the exploration of such possibilities I must leave to others. Here I content myself with a survey of the very broadest principles which are involved.

The essence of the situation is that our thinking respecting every department of experience is in process of becoming *organic*. And this again means that it is becoming personalized. We are learning to register and adapt ourselves to a more comprehensive situation in which the claims of the extensive and the intensive, of wisdom and love, of masculine and feminine, have to be reconciled at every point. We are at last realizing that if the mind restricts its attention to the realm of the phenomenal it becomes involved in a hopeless system of antinomies, circular definitions, merely regional truths, and external descriptions which it is beyond our human powers to reduce to any intelligible order. Clarification can come only from penetrating first into an inner sphere of mystical realization and then proceeding outwards again in unswerving fidelity to the controlling insights which have thus been reached. In a word, we must take our stand upon the primacy of the spiritual.

I. *The Value of Values*

Here the first demand from the intellectual point of view is obviously the development, from various standpoints, of systems of spiritual philosophy which shall in one direction expose the contradictions of materialistic and sophistical thought, and in the other consolidate and clarify the realizations reached by those who have awakened to inner experience.

¹ See I, iv, sec. 4.

In dealing with all our problems, on whatever plane they present themselves, we are dependent to an enormous extent upon intellectual formulations and definitions. We are bound to exert all our powers in the attempt to introduce order into our experience. In fact until it is so ordered it is doubtful if it can be described as experience in any complete sense. Life can manifest only within the realm of form, and its liberation depends upon our success in defining and interrelating all the numberless matrices in which it is contained. Once distinction and precision are lost we are plunged into an intolerable chaos. By the heart we identify ourselves with life; by the intellect we control and direct its expression. If either process is defective, beauty and truth fail to disclose themselves. The heart may relate us to the Real more closely than can the head; but without the head its realizations cannot be objectified. And only when objectification has been achieved is truth properly revealed to us.

And in the realm of spiritual knowledge this principle applies with undiminished force: We must organize our realizations to the highest degree compatible with preserving their character—a qualification which, as will appear later, assumes exceptional importance in this particular field. But although the task which here confronts "high philosophy" is extremely serious, it is as well to take account of the more dismal and sterile aspect of the enterprise.

We all of us, naturally enough, welcome the appearance of yet another "brilliant defence of spiritual values" or "powerful indictment of our modern civilization". Such productions are necessary, not only positively in helping us to retain our grip upon certain more elusive forms of experience, but also negatively in preserving us from the aberrations of ignorant, fanatic or sentimental thought. But how far do they really take us?

First of all, we must recognize the limitations of the type of thinker who is contemplating the spiritual heights from the somewhat swampy plains below. Concerned to establish firmly in his mind certain high realizations which reach him from such quarters, he sets out to demonstrate with great care and patience that our experience of such things as beauty, goodness, truth and personality—what we imply, in fact, when we speak of "the life of a spirit"—is as valid as any other. This means showing, for instance, that our higher responses are on a different plane from those of instinct, that they are determined from above and not from below, and that they involve the acknowledgment of an inner world of experience which is just as real as that presented to us by our physical senses, and the like.

But although such argumentation has an important function in counteracting the powerful materialistic tendencies of the age,

it is essential to realize just how far it really takes us. For some people it is indeed—apart from aesthetic satisfaction—a matter of life and death that they should be shown that their natural sympathies and intuitions are consistent with that general structure of things which logic can lay bare. "Knowledge" for such thinkers means essentially a command over implications and out-workings. Alternatives must not simply be instinctively rejected but systematically and painstakingly refuted. They proceed in their search for truth by way of intellectual consolidation, orderly and somewhat dreary progress towards a "sound conclusion" on which they can confidently take their stand.

Here, however, we are confronted with the difficulty that when this thirst for exactness at last carries the investigator into the realm of spiritual knowledge, the scientific apparatus of detachment and definition becomes seriously incongruous with the situation which he is seeking to control. For we cannot get away from the fact that the more intimate and human the subject-matter of our reflections, the more inappropriate is the language of pure intellectualism to describe it, and the more definitely are we moved to resort to the language of the organic, of poetry. A rigorously argued treatise on values cannot but offend us—just for the reason that the whole style of treatment is really applicable only to a more mechanical and exterior order of experience. While there is no inherent objection to severity and coldness, there are serious reasons why they should not appear in the wrong place. In fact, one may go so far as to assert that beyond a certain point philosophizing about our higher realizations amounts to a misapplication of reason.

Further, we have to reckon with the element of abstraction. The relation between the categories in which the philosopher is thinking in this realm and the living situations to which they refer is evidently of the most tenuous description. The conceptions employed are so few in number, and therefore so wide in their application, that they do little more than indicate to us in very general terms in what part of the universe certain truths may be discovered. In the case of most people by whom it is cultivated, philosophical thinking, so far from being a distillation, is really an anticipation of experience, and altogether a far less arduous undertaking than that of living according to the ideas which it thus manipulates.

Clearly the really searching problem with which life presents us is that of determining the degree and manner in which such principles are revealed in the particular concrete situation. There may, indeed, be sufficient evidence for their reality to justify the conclusion that they represent an authentic and important element in our experience. And on this basis the philosophically-minded can safely develop their elevated views regarding the status

of "values" and ideals. But what we are confronted with in practice is the enormous difficulty of deciding how far, and in what mode, we are associated with spiritual reality in the realm of actual existence—or in other words to what extent truth, beauty and goodness are identifiable in all the endlessly subtle and complicated manifestations with which life presents us.

If we track the implications of this situation to their source what we find is that they lead us away from the abstractions of "philosophy" into a number of very much more fertile regions: into the realm of art, of science, and finally of that transcendental science, or true theology, which is concerned with the actual and differentiated activity of the forces which are playing upon us all the time from the Unseen.

It is for this reason that in the present essay I have restricted my attention as far as possible to considering what the conflict between spiritual and materialistic values means *in detail*. On the negative side I have tried to show in concrete terms where scientific thinking fails us. And on the positive side I shall develop the view that association with that overworked trio, the Good, the True and the Beautiful, means little until it is translated to the plane of exact cosmological knowledge.

Another difficulty presented to us by our experts on values is that they paralyse any further advance beyond the point which they have actually reached by a display of rationalistic "scepticism". The standpoint which they assume is that while the reality of certain interior experiences relating to such things as goodness, calm, poise, rhythm, purity and the like, must be fully acknowledged, we must preserve a severely cautious attitude regarding their ultimate inner source. They result, it is admitted, from contact with something transcendental which acts upon us from beyond the frontiers of our own being (and which is presumably the same reality which we experience alternatively in another mode through the medium of the physical senses). But regarding its character we must strictly refrain from speculating.

The only comment which one can make is that psychologically this form of agnosticism is simply not realizable. For our experience of states of mind of this order is so indissolubly bound up with intimations and feelings regarding their source that they cannot in any serious sense be considered in isolation from it. As well seek to detach our experience of sunlight on the body from our sense of the great luminary from which it is derived! All one can say is that the thinker who seeks to maintain such a difficult position is either only dealing with the most rudimentary experience in this field, or is simplifying his experience in an arbitrary and indefensible fashion. For once the soul has been mystically awakened it is irresistibly moved to reach out towards the sources

of its experiences. And thereby it is carried, both in the objective and the subjective sphere, far beyond the frontiers of "philosophy".

When we turn to those philosophers who are defending "values" from a more ultimate standpoint—who are expounding their theories from *within* the realm of religious conviction—the situation is somewhat relieved. But there still remains serious cause for dissatisfaction. To begin with, we again find ourselves in the atmosphere of abstractions—this time of the type manipulated by the Gifford Lecturer, who displays his powers in demonstrating in the most dexterous fashion the relations between such highly intellectual conceptions as Freedom, Mind, Matter, Spirit, Personality, Being and Deity. Once again, we are led to suspect that speculation is leading us dangerously away from life. For not only are the resulting conclusions too general to have any serious significance for us, but they have the serious effect of turning our attention away from more creative possibilities in the spiritual sphere. It is surely no chance that it is just those thinkers who are most expert in, and satisfied by, this pastime of co-ordinating general ideas who are most indifferent to the whole question of acquiring exact cosmological knowledge in this field, and in developing a really living and inspirational relationship to the world of invisible life around us.

Nor is this all. Even apart from the question of abstraction, it is impossible to deny that, grateful as we are for it in one respect, the indisputable and unswerving "soundness" of the orthodox theologian has about it a somewhat oppressive and disappointing quality. Why? Because, as I have already suggested earlier,¹ that *philosophia perennis* on which these thinkers so firmly take their stand is really fundamentally a humanistic affair. The crown and culmination of their systems may be God, but the style and manner of their thinking is for the most part that of men who have not been quickened by contact with the Mystery. In reading their works we cannot escape the impression that rationalism has got the upper hand over the essential transcendental realizations which it has set out to organize. What they have to offer us is sound logic, sanity, humour, philosophic balance, mellow wisdom—but not that insight, intuition and fire which are the fruits of a transcendence of the humanistic plane of consciousness. The mind may be guarded in one direction against dangerous errors and misconceptions, but in the process it is excluded from that realm of living and creative experience which is the very nerve of the spiritual life. There is wanting that sense of intimacy with the great Unseen, that responsiveness to the operation of spiritual forces, that passage beyond purely philosophical thought, which alone serve to convince us that we are listening to those who can be said to be speaking

¹ See I, i, sec. 19.

from the inside, and not simply as conventional representatives of a historical school of thought.

Further, it does not necessarily follow that because a conclusion is sound one must go to great pains in supporting it. We cannot but feel that a great deal of the fastidious rationalization which is indulged in by these thinkers is devoted to demonstrating propositions which should really be almost taken for granted by every individual with an awakened spiritual consciousness. Surely we do not need to read through pages of close argumentation in order to become convinced that, say, personality is more important than mechanism, that man is a being who participates in the Eternal while living physically in the temporal, or that God is immanent as well as transcendent in nature? And must we all go to such lengths in demonstrating, ostensibly to others, but really to ourselves, the inadequacy of various types of naturalistic philosophy? Such scrupulous ratiocination has about it a nervous quality which argues a basic uncertainty and uneasiness. One is obliged to believe that the most significant contributions to the New Religion will be made, not by those who are conducting such elaborate rearguard actions, but by men of inspiration who, already assured regarding fundamentals, are pressing forward in faith to discover what can be built upon them.

This consideration is of particular importance at the present epoch for the reason that—if the contention advanced in this book is correct—we are entering a phase of consciousness in which direct insight and intuition will increasingly take the place of mechanical deduction and inference. Extensive will be largely replaced by intensive knowledge. People will learn to register truth interiorly in terms of quality, and this with ever greater accuracy, and in the field of religion in particular careful logical demonstrations and appeals to principles will become more and more irrelevant and superfluous.

2. *From Fact to Process*

So much for apologetics. We are now in a position to consider how the world presents itself to us when we advance from merely defending spiritual values to discovering what they really entail for us in terms of creative living.

The first expression of "organic" consciousness in this field is an impatience with the creations of *l'esprit géométrique*. For it proceeds by denying all sorts of subtle aspects of experience which the imaginative perceive that we cannot afford to ignore. As a result its creations have a peculiarly impoverished, superficial or misleading character which arouses impatience or resentment in

all people with strong and deep intuitions, who are moved as a result to vindicate the claims of a more vital form of awareness.

The more extreme manifestations of this dissatisfaction take the form of some sort of a "revolt from reason", the deliberate exaltation of the instincts at the expense of the cerebrating and anaemic brain. D. H. Lawrence's cult of the "blood" and the "dark gods" within represents, of course, the most notorious modern expression of this tendency, and although he undoubtedly had valuable things to tell us, and his repudiation of "civilization" was of great significance for our age, we are most of us by now sufficiently convinced that any attempt on the part of a highly conscious personality to revert to the primitive in this unrestrained fashion can lead only to disaster. The problem before us is the immensely more difficult one of synthesizing the passional and the intellectual elements in our being in terms of our modern awareness. We must move *forward* to a new simplicity.

But in any case the mere compensation for excessive cerebration represents the simplest aspect of the problem before us. What we have to consider is not the relatively straightforward process of balancing up the different sides of our nature—a Bach fugue or a walk on the downs to offset a morning with statistics—but the actual unifying on the plane of thought and action of the positive and the negative potencies in the soul.

We have already taken note earlier of the dangerous tendency of the rationalistic sociologist to plan a new type of social order on the basis of the results of a very limited type of perception, and then to call in the artist to adorn the soulless framework which he has thus constructed. This is a hopeless procedure. We must hold fast to the principle that only when the rational faculties are working in harmony with the deeper processes of the spirit can any really creative order be brought into existence.

However, there are increasing indications that we are awakening to the need for such a synthesis. Highly significant in this respect is the breakdown in numbers of fields of that analytical mode of thinking which we inherited from the last century—typified by the emergence of the principles of Gestalt and Personalism in psychology. And our growing interest in the character and function of organisms points, of course, in the same direction. The emphasis is unmistakably being shifted inwards: phenomena which externally present themselves as isolated and disconnected are seen to be organized in virtue of deep interior principles which cannot be rationalized, and with which the poets are more familiar than the logicians.

Of great interest also in this respect are the developments of Non-Aristotelian thought. The inadequacy for all more important purposes of the "either-or" way of thinking is today being placed

beyond all doubt. We now realize that if we are to gain any effective control over phenomena we must learn to think of objects, not as allocated to abstract classes on the relatively sterile A—Not-A principle, but as having their character determined by the web of associations into which they enter. They become for us, therefore, more like points at which a number of forces intersect, elements in wider structures from which they derive their attributes. A thing does not exist in the abstract; its significance depends upon the place which it occupies in one or more systems. It must be conceived of not abstractly but relativistically, in terms of what makes it what it is at a particular point of time, considered in relation to the pattern in which it is a unit. In fine, what was previously thought of as an object now appears primarily as a coincidence.¹

As a result, the sort of terms which were formerly regarded as defining the nature of a thing are now treated only as points of departure for a process of particularization. The abstract is converted into the here-and-now. Truth becomes conditional, inseparable from process. At every possible point the observer is introduced into the equation. The whole situation becomes far more fluid (yet at the same time more exact), and less and less describable in terms of rigid and fixed conceptions.

It will be apparent that this rejection of unilluminating generalities can consort very easily with a disposition to contemplate experience as a Whole. For if we resist the tendency of logic to create artificial and arbitrary divisions between aspects of experience which are basically united, we tend to become sympathetic to any type of philosophy in which Nature is conceived of as an organism, no part of which can be separated from any other except for more external and less significant purposes. And since again this interior unity can only be experienced and thought of mystically, in any world view of this type great emphasis will inevitably be laid upon the function of emotion and intuition in relating us to reality. This is, of course, the tendency expressed by Whitehead, whose work, in spite of its obscurity in many respects, must undoubtedly be considered as being of great significance for the future development of our consciousness in this direction.

The problems with which we are here concerned are obviously difficult. But it certainly looks very much as if we can detect the operation of a principle of inwardness, and that those physicists and sociologists who are being led by the progress of their investigations to think along these lines are thereby only attaining to an order of realization which is the birthright of the artist and the mystic, for whom abstract thinking is always anathema, and

¹ Here an interesting parallel presents itself with the Jaina philosophical doctrine of *anekāntavāda*, or "many-sidedness".

this even though they may sometimes be reluctant to admit the fact themselves.

3. *Consciousness and Existence*

Up to this point we have been concerned with the effect of interior quickening in impelling us to think more subtly and flexibly about the outer world of the senses in so far as that world is considered as existing as a self-contained system. But clearly this system itself is only an element in a wider system which embraces the subjective consciousness of human beings. And we find that it is just in respect of this additional factor in the equation that the "organic" thinker makes his most important contribution to philosophy.

If we analyse the elements in our experience which are left out of account by the rationalist in this field we find that the root of the matter lies in every case in a neglect of our experience as individual persons. And although a consideration of this theme entails an excursion into that realm of "value philosophy" which I have just characterized as being peculiarly arid and unrewarding, I feel that it must be undertaken before we proceed further. My justification for taking this course is that I do, in fact, "proceed further"; whereas the expert on values usually, as I say, offers us his conclusions as an insubstantial substitute for that real attack on the problem to which they should properly serve only as a prelude.

It is impossible to deny that the universe of science is composed of a multitude of interrelated elements in relation to which man appears as a detached and insignificant spectator. For while the mass of objects which awaken his emotions and provide him with the material for his "inner life" can be organized into a system—or at least into a collection of pluralistic systems—that "inner life" itself cannot in the nature of the case be subjected to the same process of systematization. As a result the objective aspect of the universe tends to acquire an impressively solid and independent character, tempting the unreflective to identify it with "reality". It may, indeed, correspond in some valid fashion to truth; but in any authentic act of vision the sensuous and the structural are indis-severable. It is precisely through their intimate interfusion that we know that we are in the presence of reality. In the end we are driven to recognize that the highest order of philosophical notation consists of ideas (not conceptions) in the fullest Platonic sense, of which Coleridge has written: "this is that which cannot be *generalized*, on which the mind can exercise no modifying functions—that which can only be *contemplated*—that which is deeper than

all intelligence, inasmuch as it represents the element of the Will, and its essential underivability."

If, however, in redressing the balance we introduce the "personal" into the equation, it is important that we should recognize that we are completing the picture by traversing the universe in an entirely different dimension from that in which science undertakes its explorations. For whereas the man of science is concerned to describe objects just in so far as they can be seen to enter into a system, the mystic and the artist are concerned to describe them in so far as they affect directly the individual personalities by which they are contemplated. And to the depths of experience which can be explored in each mode there is no limit which can be set.

Here the first demand in this scientific age is that we should balance our exploration of the universe of science by awakening to the importance of that impressive tradition in western thought which extends from Augustine through Duns Scotus, Giordano Bruno, Malebranche, Leibnitz and the Cambridge Platonists to Lao-Tse and Maine de Biran and finally to Martin Buber (the author of that important essay, *I and Thou*).

Further, in this matter we must hold fast to our realization that what may be described as the vertical and personal dimension is of more fundamental significance than that horizontal and impersonal dimension which is the object of scientific enquiry. In simple terms, people are more important than things. And if, instead of attempting to start as does the man of science by concentrating on objects and working back into the field of personality, we examine both the world of people and that of things from the standpoint of the first, we shall find that everything will fall into its proper place.

In other words, we must begin with the foundation of all experience—our human consciousness—and assign the facts which exist for it to their proper subordinate place. Scientific knowledge will then appear as a systematized abstraction, the lowest common element in our collective subjective-objective experience. And—what is very much more important—all our difficulties with higher states of awareness will disappear. Instead of emotion, art and religion presenting themselves as disturbing intruders into a closed and externally conceived rationalistic universe, or as a merely harmless by-play with little or no relation to the pursuit of truth, they will appear in their proper light as the characteristic forms of our deeper experience of the Real.

What it comes to is that if we wish to pierce below the surface of things we must move, not outwards, but inwards. We must reverse the procedure of the positivist who begins by regarding the world of the senses as the more or less deceptive appearance of something

behind it—matter divested of those “secondary” qualities with which we are supposed to endow it. The search for truth is thus conceived of as an attempt to penetrate through phenomena to their objective foundation—the “thing in itself” as opposed to our subjective picture of it.

For such a desperate enterprise there may perhaps have been some justification at a time when men still believed that matter was the solid substratum of the appearances with which we are familiar. But with the progress of research in the field of physics this theoretically firm foundation has been etherealized to an extreme degree. And what is more, the operations which take place in this region appear to be remarkably similar to those at work within our own minds. The romantically tragic conception of “a Nature indifferent to our aims” seems to be less and less applicable to the actual situation. In fact it looks almost as if that Light which we know inwardly in terms of consciousness is also, in another modality, the principle which lies at the basis of phenomena. In a word, the universe may be made of nothing more substantial than thought-stuff. It is consciousness looking at itself through a glass darkly. All knowledge is self-recognition.

Now the interesting feature of this development is that it is deeply consonant with the teachings of more mystical schools of thought regarding the nature of the seemingly material objective world in which we find ourselves living. For the transcendental thinker has always insisted that matter is a myth, and that behind phenomena there is nothing real—while if there were it would in any case be inaccessible to us. The search for a real external world as their foundation can lead us only into a desert of sterile speculation. The realm of appearances represents, on the contrary, what may be described as the external boundary of knowledge—in the sense that it is the ultimate limit of otherness with which the self finds itself confronted, the rim of that wheel which has its centre in consciousness, the mirror which reflects back to us, in an incomplete and distorted form, the truth about our own being.

In other words, although there is nothing *behind* the visible, there is a great deal *in front* of it—in the realm, that is to say, of the consciousness for which it exists. We *are* largely cut off from Reality, we *do* for the most part live in a world of partial and confused realizations. But this is not because we are looking at an external reality through coloured or clouded glasses, but because we are limiting our inner consciousness by postulating a three-dimensional world of colours, shapes and movements within which we have locked ourselves up. Through our senses we are shut off, not from “things in themselves”, but from *our own deeper selves*. We are concerned, essentially, with a limitation imposed, not on Nature, but upon consciousness. Hence the true metaphysical task

before us is that of penetrating *inwards*. We shall then gradually come to know in its fulness and extension that world of inner reality which we have presented to ourselves in terms of a system of material qualities and relationships.

Instead, then, of seeking to press through sense-data to a mythical realm of featureless matter which underlies them, we shall extend the range of our self-knowledge and awaken to the rich and glorious inner reality of which they are the limited symbolization. Those so-called "primary" qualities which give the outer world its massive material and convincing character, converting it for us into a region in which we have transactions with solid, impenetrable and separated objects, will now appear as constitutive of the most extreme stage of that illusion to which we all have initially to submit as a result of the fact of physical incarnation. As the higher consciousness awakens they will be recognized as being purely limiting conceptions, appropriate to the earliest stage of our awareness, but to be transcended in the measure that, in the light of a true spiritual awareness, we come to perceive that all finiteness and separation are illusory and unreal.

What it all comes to, therefore, is that in order to penetrate the sphere of Reality we must concentrate, as the wise have always taught, first and foremost on the Self. Then, and then only, will the true character of the phenomenal properly reveal itself to us. In the opposite direction there can lie only barrenness and illusion.

4. *Public and Private*

And now to consider our actual knowledge of the world. What we experience is a combination of an inner and unmistakable sense of freedom, uniqueness and creativity, with an equally powerful and definite sense of living in a world of stern objectivity and necessity, the demands of which we can in no way evade. In other words there is around us a vast universe of objective relationships which we each of us traverse, ant-like, in accordance with the individual pattern of our life-history. The Pyramids, angina pectoris, the kitchen clock, the Grand Junction Canal, Bach, non-Euclidean geometry, the District Railway, Lao-Tse—all these things are there anyway; we come across them or not as the case may be in the course of our predestined pilgrimage from birth to death. They are, as we say, "up our street". And there is no other street along which we are permitted to proceed.

Nor is this all. If we have any metaphysical insight we realize very well that our own little list of selections from the Grand Compendium is presented to us in a strict and inevitable order which is itself as deeply fraught with meaning as is that according

to which they are related to one another as part of the universally recognized structure of the universe. The succession of things which we see out of the windows of our particular train, and the universal pattern of objective facts to which we are impelled to assign them, are equally significant, and represent the two great complementary aspects of our experience. There is the universe considered as existing as an independent system, as that which resists and checks phantasy, as a matter of common knowledge. And there is the path which you, I and all of us follow in traversing it, which is the occasion of our deeper experiences, and the factor which determines our actions. The first is the primary reality for the man of science; the second for the artist and the mystic. The first provides the limiting conditions of self-expression, the second is the process of self-expression itself. Our personal relation to the world is such that a whole complex of objects present themselves to us at any given moment as resistant, as "other", as impenetrable, as what we expressively call "hard facts". And it is to this world of uncompromising objectivity that we have to relate the lyrical impulses of our being. Our exuberance and spontaneity are continually chastened by a peripheral sense of margins, limits and laws.

In this accommodation of our inwardness to the inflexibles resides the art of life, which is the technique of enfiling, tacking, swimming with the current, resourcefully appropriating the action of gravity, making skilful use of times and seasons, taking advantage generally of Nature's processes instead of resisting them. But this is, of course, elementary. In order to gain any real grasp of the situation we have to realize that this conception of a multitude of conscious individuals engaged in a perpetual process of adjusting themselves to an uncompromising objective reality can have arisen in our minds only as a result of our failure to maintain a monistic vision of reality.

In other words, as the mystics have always affirmed, the inside and the outside of experience become sundered for us only because we have been seduced by the seemingly material character of phenomena. In contemplating "things" we are really contemplating personality under the modes of space and time. Within the "outer" world there is active the same principle of freedom and spontaneity which we experience within our own being—just as within ourselves there is also operative that principle of law which we observe to be at work in the outer universe. There is a realm of connected events—that realm which is carved out of the continuum by science for its own particular purposes. But on a deeper level there are other forces at work which shape the total pattern in a more radical manner. The old-fashioned rationalistic conception of the universe as the product of the automatic out-

working of certain initial impulses can no longer be entertained. We are impelled today to believe that science can only abstract certain regions of superficial connectedness from a wider field.

Now, as already observed, the remarkable thing is that the deepest foundations of the external world would appear to be closely associated with the inner spirit of man. It is only on the surface of existence that minds and things are presented to us in sharp and apparently unsurmountable contrast. What we find when we penetrate deeper is that we are somehow linked with the creative forces at work in the depths of the phenomenal universe; we have to reckon with inner processes which are at once beyond the plumbing of science and, as I say, akin to those which are at work within ourselves.

And this is indicated by the extraordinarily deep connection between the activities which take place in Nature on the one hand and those which take place in the human soul in the other. If we were really living in a realm of being that was fundamentally alien to us it would be impossible for us to illuminate, symbolize and interpret our subjective experience by the use of natural and organic imagery. No imaginative person will accept the superficial view that we simply "project" our own personal feelings into the surrounding world. The truth is surely, rather, that the life of Nature—as opposed to the system of skeletal relationships contemplated by physics—and our own soul life are radically one, the objective and the subjective aspects of the same reality. In other words, a world which is conceived of apart from our feelings about it—i.e. as anything but the correlate of our own interior being—is an unreal abstraction.

Regarded from this point of view, the "personal history" of the individual appears in an entirely different light. So far from being a "private" affair involving a succession of contacts with objects which are more "real" than the individual who thus serially experiences them, it now appears as one of the two basic principles by the interaction of which the drama of life is worked out. The processes of Nature and the processes of consciousness are disclosed as the warp and the woof of the texture of reality. Science provides us with a picture of a material system, constructed in terms of the relations existing between its elements—the framework of our common experience.

Further, we have myriads of individuals who enter into this scheme only in so far as their behaviour can be generalized. But each of these individuals is a "soul" with a private collection of aspirations, strivings, hopes and fears. Their personal history, however, has no place in the scientific system. Science has no interest in, or power of interpreting, the fact that certain objects which form part of its universe come my way rather than others,

and that they do so in a certain order, combination and succession. My relation to the outer world in this respect, except in so far as it can be dealt with in terms of my psychological reaction to stimuli, is for science a matter of "chance". Why was I born in 1891? What "brought" Iris into my life, and at that time? Why should I and not you be afflicted with hereditary consumption? What is the "meaning" of my visit to India? Is not the arrival of this book, this person, an "answer" to my prayers? And so on.

These, like all other problems involving fate, destiny, and Providence are essentially metaphysical in character; and it should be perfectly evident that they are raised for us as the result of very deep intuitions and realizations which we cannot afford to ignore. What goes on right inside me and what "happens" to me in the outer world independently of my power of selection are two complementary aspects of *one* fundamental process. To sever them is to perpetrate a piece of "bifurcation" as disastrous as that created in another dimension by science in separating matter from mind. This every sensitive person knows quite clearly. There is a connection—not by any means superficial or obvious, but none the less real—between the deepest motions of my spirit and everything which takes place in my life, including even those events which I have no means of controlling.

Not only do I (if I am spiritually awakened) respond intuitively to what is awaiting me in life and orient myself accordingly, but on an inner plane, without any direct physical intervention, I can even in certain directions polarize and modify the course of events by the intensity of my prayers, dedications, aspirations and resolutions. For I am *not* confronted with an external universe which is exclusively mechanical in its operations. And what is equally significant, at any of those more intense moments at which the sharpened pattern of external events coincides with an interior condition of spiritual tension I *know* that fundamentally there is only one process involved. Otherwise I should not experience the paradox that I am most free just at those junctures when an extreme exertion of my will is conjoined with unprotesting submission to an iron necessity.

It is this basic unity between the complex of external events and our deeper interior states which renders possible such manifestations as prophecy, magic (which, as I have already suggested, we shall have to take very seriously), the sense of destiny experienced by the "genius" and the "great man", and profound resignation to what religion knows as the Will of God. Nothing, on the contrary, can be more childish than the attitude to this question of the cruder type of scientist who, recognizing connections between phenomena only in terms of mechanical causation or routine, regards all concern with such metaphysical relation-

ships as "superstition". All one can say is that they are an integral element in the deeper structure of the universe.

5. *Warp and Woof*

It follows from all this that if we wish to create a satisfactory philosophical framework in order to accommodate our experience we must think in terms of concepts which include both the sideways this-and-that relationship explored by science and the "opposite" face-to-face relationship of I-and-this and I-and-Thou. This is obviously a task which is almost impossible of achievement, since as philosophy can proceed only by generalization it can discuss the second of these modes of realization only indirectly by converting it back into the first. And this is clearly unsatisfactory. For the unextended experience involved in relating oneself to the extended world of objects cannot in the nature of the case be included in that world—any more than a figure at the saluting post can be included in the regiment which is marching past him. Hence the enormous difficulties encountered by such thinkers as Bergson in their attempts to describe the character of intuitive vision. For that in this realm which corresponds to the lateral movement of the mind when it surveys the horizontal field of experience is a movement in the vertical plane, along that terrible metaphysical longitude which connects the heights with the depths of the cosmos, a movement which must be measured, not in terms of spatial expansion, but in terms of agonizing intensification of being.

It will be apparent also that although this passage through experience is accomplished primarily in terms of emotion it corresponds very closely to that intellectual traversing of the universe which is its complement. For "emotion" implies essentially a registration of psychic distance; the whole concern of the artist and mystic is with the degree of identification which he can achieve with the object, in which ideally he becomes perfectly fused in a moment of ecstasy. Hence we are presented with a universe which proves to be psycho-physical in its structure. And the point at which reality is effectively disclosed to us is evidently that at which these two dimensions of knowledge intersect with electrical effect.

This situation cannot but bring with it a certain danger. For although we cannot fairly demand of philosophy that it should deal with an aspect of experience which is by its very nature insusceptible to generalized treatment, there is a powerful tendency to minimize the importance of that which we cannot effectively think about. The truth of science, which is expressed in terms of

the logical consistency between the elements in a physical system, inevitably acquires a disproportionate prominence for our minds. And this is, I think, decisively shown by the fact that although the I-this, and still more the I-Thou, dimension of experience is obviously fundamental, philosophy has until recently shown an extraordinary lack of interest in its possibilities.

The subject is naturally a difficult one. But certain elementary features which it presents may perhaps be indicated here. First of all, we must return to that principle to which I have earlier called attention: Truth in its completeness exists only for the fully awakened individual. "Things" appear to me in their most significant aspect just when I am most deeply "myself". It follows that until human beings find themselves in an intense and vital relation to them, mere objects as they are described and classified by science represent only one pole of the magnet, one half of a pair of cymbals, the maiden still unkissed. At the most they may be considered as actual and existent; we can chart their bare presence on our maps. But they are not "real", for the reason that they still lack their full subjective complement.

Their status is that of the paleozoic landscapes portrayed in popular manuals of science which are filled with objects and creatures which, since they existed only for organisms of a very primitive type which had not even our type of eye, can scarcely be said to have possessed at the time the character ascribed by them in retrospect by the artist.

Reality is experienced only when the subjective and objective elements in our experience are in equilibrium; this is surely fundamental. If the first predominates we have phantasy and illusion. If the second predominates we have bare actuality; the object is there before us in a minimal sense, but dreamlike, statistical, evidential, characterless, or even invested with a strange metaphysical horror. We enter the realm of the Real only in those precious and significant moments when inner and outer are synthesized and fused. The merely identified and untransfigured object is too poverty-stricken an entity to have any serious claims upon our philosophical attention! It follows that it is quite misleading to talk, with the psychiatrists, of teaching a person to adapt himself to "reality"; the proper term should surely be "objectivity". For he brings the other hemisphere of the world with him to the encounter.

This, however, is not all. Our relation to objects is not merely expressed in apprehending them in a deep and human fashion; we use them also as instruments for expressing ourselves in terms of action. We enter into Reality, not only by contemplating the forms and processes of life, but by modifying our environment so as to express just what each of us is in particular. And by so doing

we bring into existence an order which is of a higher type than that known to science—higher because it is created by associating elements in terms, not of their physical structure, but of their organic unity.

We can scarcely avoid the conclusion that spiritual, as opposed to merely scientific, truth emerges just at that point at which the extensive is realized by the individual in an intensive mode. That which is true "for all observers" constitutes only the raw material out of which vital truth is extracted and shaped. The accurate apprehension of "facts" is the necessary condition of all creative thinking; but their function in mediating to us Reality is inferior to that of experience which has been personalized. No knowledge is really significant while it still remains in the limbo of the unappropriated. "Facts" have real meaning for us only in so far as they are the objective complement of an interior condition of soul. They are filings which group themselves into a pattern in the field of a subjective magnet, dust gathered up in a psychic whirlwind, the rim of a wheel with an ineffable, subjective hub. And only through the excitation of the magnet, the intensity of the whirlwind, or the swift rotation of the wheel, will they be swept into a living and revealing order. To eliminate the individuality of the observer is to eliminate a basic element in the cosmic structure.¹

Reason cannot, therefore, claim in this matter to have the final word. The true centre of knowledge is like every mystical centre everywhere. It is distributed amongst a myriad individual consciousnesses in each of which self and world are brought into creative association. Just as an invisible current of electricity becomes light only when it has illuminated a circuit of lamps, so what we uncritically describe as "the" universe comes fully into being only when it is experienced within each of us individually. The true universe is the universe of science internally differentiated, the sum of its reflections within millions of human minds, each of which when released from its psychological bondage is so harmonized with every other that their common vision proves to be organic. For on this level also truth has a universal significance. By an apparent paradox that which has been highly individualized has a general application. The intensive is only the extensive in another—but a more significant—mode.

One of the implications of this conception of the universe is that the historical process acquired enormous significance as the complement of that aspect of the world explored by science. And

¹ Hence one finds it difficult to agree with Bertrand Russell when he urges that philosophy should become a science and "aim at results independent of the tastes and temperament of the philosopher who advocates them". This is a good example of "sideways" thinking. Impersonally established truth in this sphere, even if it could be arrived at, would be "truth" only in a very limited sense of the term. Truth-seeking implies not only self-effacement, but also self-disclosure as a selective principle.

these two dimensions of experience are, of course, so closely inter-related that they can only artificially be sundered. Thus it is just in virtue of an individual's unique personal history that he occupies at a particular moment that vantage point from which he is able to perceive a relation between two points in the "public" universe which might otherwise escape notice (cf. Paris through the eyes of a Chinaman). And yet apart from these respects in which his "private" history determines his contribution to "public" knowledge (i.e. truths which are valid no matter who has discovered them) there is to be considered the value and meaning of that history itself as a unique element in the life of the cosmos. And so on. But the pursuit of such speculations lies outside this book.¹

In any case it is plain that philosophy cannot afford to neglect the significance of personality. Admittedly, the processes of our inner life have no meaning except in so far as they are externalized in the form of ideas and actions which have their place in the objective universe of common experience. Our secret strivings and aspirations, if they are to be creative, must be finally translated into universal terms. We must first submit to the outer world and then bring forth out of ourselves that which can be accommodated within it. Subjectivity is only the intermediate phase between a passive and an active relation to externals. That which is appropriated by us from the universal inevitably returns to it again after having been passed through the prism of personality. We realize ourselves in individualizing and raising to a higher power that which can never be our own. Each of us is metaphysically located at the focal point of a beam of light; the rays which converge upon us from one direction are diffused (or should be) again from us in the other. And our justification to existence lies only in the fact that we continually perform this function of spiritual refraction.

It is true enough that our experience of the personalized must always be balanced by a response to the vast realm of ordered being which is its complement. Otherwise we become threatened by over-intensification, spiritual suffocation, oppression by the localised and immediate. Yet all the same the function of personalization is of great import. For although the natural bias of the man of science is towards emphasizing the facts which we

¹ I would mention, however, that the findings of psychic science throw a very interesting light upon the deeper relation between objective and subjective reality. Communications from "the other side" seem to be almost unanimous in testifying to the fact that on the inner planes of being external conditions are subordinated to the rapport existing between the personalities living within them. In other words, spatial arrangements become a function of the spiritual relations between individuals. Mutual sympathy means co-existence, mutual antipathy difference in location. The physical world in which we are at present living would therefore seem to be far from typical of the deeper levels of reality, a mode of existence which disciplines and individualizes the soul by divorcing physical from spiritual relationships (see Part One, Chapter VII). And this makes the attempts of men of science to consider it as a closed system appear as being even more misguided than ever.

are thus, as it were, polarizing, it remains true that in so far as they are considered independently of this process they remain sterile and characterless. They come to life only when they are seen in their proper perspective—as the external mechanism of spiritual intercourse, as the objective counters with which we play the great game of human communication.

We can say, if we wish to, that a gas “has” such and such properties. But this piece of information has little significance unless it is shared with other minds. And that process of sharing is obviously just as vital as that of discovering the facts which constitute its occasion. It is only the *form* of the activity which leads the unreflective to give undue prominence to the objective element in the transaction. Its nerve lies surely in communion between souls.

Further, even that interrogation of Nature with which science is concerned is itself, transcendently regarded, a form of intercourse with Mind. For to the mystical vision physical objects and their properties appear only as the representation in space and time of a veiled Consciousness into which we also enter through the subjective door (see the passage from Newman quoted on an earlier page).

In any case this communion between minds, visible or invisible, is such a tremendous factor in the life of every sensitive personality that the medium through which it is effected cannot but have for us all, in one sense, a subordinate significance. For it can be achieved with equal intensity and sureness even in terms of the most elementary type of common knowledge; sophistication simply enriches the objective content of the experience.

But its essence is always mutuality. This is indicated decisively enough by the fact that even those individuals who have a wide knowledge of Nature can be rejuvenated, liberated or destroyed by that statistically negligible entity, a *single* other human being. Is this simply because they have failed to become absorbed in the austere and impersonal pursuits of the scientist and the philosopher? Is it surely wiser to conclude that the apparently fantastically disproportionate effect of such experiences points rather to the fact that the relation between personalities is far more profound and mysterious than that which exists between our minds and Nature. It is true that, as remarked above, what the scientist thinks of as Nature is for the mystic externalized Personality. But the fact remains that contemplation of the external material and biological forms of an indwelling life has not the same intense character as that association between two living spirits which is involved in every true contact between human beings. For by it the universe becomes transparent to the two minds which look through it into the depths of one another's being.

6. *The Inner Universe*

We have now considered the way in which mystical awareness can transform both our conceptions of the universe of physics and of that wider universe which includes our individualized, emotional selves. It will be evident, however, that this is not the end of the story. For the activity of the Infinite within our deeper beings will impel us finally to pass beyond the frontiers even of this humanized world and to awaken to the reality of further dimensions of being altogether.

The way in which an individual's picture of the world is gradually modified as his interior consciousness deepens defies exact analysis. The transformation involved is not only extremely subtle, but impossible to explain to those who have not already to some degree developed this deeper order of awareness. It is not simply a question of becoming free from the more gross and palpable sensational bondages, but of refining the nature to a point at which even the superior satisfactions of the cultivated are seen in a different light as being conditioned by less obvious processes of the unregenerate desire nature. And this brings with it a corresponding transvaluation in the realm of thought. As emancipation progresses the categories imperceptibly change. The formulations and characterizations which formerly seemed so illuminating and satisfying now appear as inadequate to a more mystical order of experience. The familiar universe by degrees dissolves around us into a mist, from out of which new and more significant configurations emerge—those of a world perceived with the eye of true imagination.

More and more, the world is contemplated from within. To the interior vision all seemingly material forces are revealed as being in the last resort personal and spiritual in character. That sphere of phenomenal happenings which is investigated by science appears only as the outworking and precipitation in space and time of a more interior sphere of feeling, will and mental energy. Within the familiar three dimensions of sense we begin to experience others existing as it were in a different realm; the scheme built up by rationalism proves to be applicable only to a surface system of relationships which disguises from us the deeper rhythms according to which the processes of life are accomplished. We are trying all the time to solve an infinite problem in finite terms.

Hence, as soon as the higher spiritual nature begins to awaken within us we are impelled to new formulations and interpretations of our experience. We find that everything must first of all be renounced from the standpoint of the ordinary consciousness and reappropriated by the higher. A subtle, but radical, transition is

effected by virtue of which rational principles are first of all seen to lead by themselves to deception and illusion, and then recognized as having immeasurable value once they are applied within the realm of a metaphysical realization which transcends them. In other words, we meet again with the paradox of phenomenalism. We have no weapon for dealing formally with the realm of appearances except that of the reason; yet until we know inwardly that the situation which we are seeking to master is actually trans-rational and infinite, reason will only lead us astray.

As time goes on we perceive that our accepted system of logic controls only a small selection of the total relationships into which things enter, and the less revealing relations at that. The situation is really immeasurably wider than it appears to be to the mind which thinks in terms of ordinary categories. And it is extremely interesting to find that the principles of analogy and correspondence which, although they are almost irrelevant to the purposes of modern science, have always been of the greatest importance for mystical thought, now begin to acquire cardinal significance. This means nothing less than the beginning of organic vision, vision from within, rather than from without, the Mystery.

The effect of this illumination is that our whole picture of the external world is completely transformed. In these high moments we see everything around us under an infinite aspect, in the light of Eternity. The Real shines through the forms by which it is normally veiled from our eyes. Both in the philosophical and the poetic mode we transcend our accustomed plane of vision. All is perceived to be in essence one. Objects, although distinct, are seen to be in spiritual affinity with each other, interfused in a far more intimate fashion than their purely physical relationships would suggest. And at the same time they are also known to be deeply associated with the human personalities by which they are contemplated.

To enter this interior sphere is to move from the realm of form into that of the life by which it is animated. In its relation to the exterior world it is revealed as that which infills the cold realm of factual existence—the universe of science—with meaning and beauty, raises the mechanical to the plane of the organic and infinitizes the finite. In its lower aspect it is the sub-rational, the vast realm of vegetative existence, the world of senseless dreams and low-grade psychism, the seed-plot of every phantasy and mirage which has ever betrayed and confused the mind of man. Any extreme response to this elemental sphere is for human beings a regression, a retreat into the primitive and chaotic.

But it has also a higher aspect as the super-rational. In this sense it is the More by association with which we can transform and elevate the processes of life, by imposing upon it higher and

more potent rhythms, relating it to the deeper levels of reality. This implies—as the physicists are beginning to suspect—that what appears to be solid matter is really “mind stuff” which is subject at its roots to the influence of Spirit. In other words, it lies in our power to re-create the external world so that it expresses ever more fully the character of an indwelling Perfection. It is powerful over us only for so long as we take it for what it seems.

This transmutation is accomplished by the soul of man. And the art or science of the spirit consists in first of all deepening the association of the lesser with the greater Self and then giving expression to this intensification of being by turning the mind outwards again upon the external world. This personification of cosmic force renders possible such manifestations as spiritual healing, “magic”, rejuvenation, inspiration, prophecy, transfiguration—anything, in fact, which in a creative sense “breaks the rules” of natural and accustomed behaviour.

Further, that realm of rarefied matter by which the physical realm can be spiritualized when activated by the mind of man can be known immediately by those who have developed the power to do so. We then have that experience of higher planes and spheres of being reported by seers and sensitives. It must be affirmed that although ethereal they are as objective as that in which we dwell in the body—with the difference, however, that being more inward they correspond more closely to the subjective states of the spirit. For, as already remarked, the deeper the level to which we penetrate, the more complete the reconciliation between self and not-self becomes.

The mark of the inspirational individual is that he knows securely within the depths of his being that first of all the Within is the superior reality, and that secondly it is accessible to his soul. This association with the invisible sources of life and knowledge is achieved by most mystical natures only in subjective terms. That is to say, they respond to the influences acting upon them from within largely in an unconscious and unpremeditated fashion with no clear consciousness of the character of their instrumentation. And this, one may suggest, is a state of affairs with which as time goes on we shall become increasingly dissatisfied. For we have to take account of the fundamental principle that the more consciously and deliberately a person polarizes his mind to the Within, the greater the flow of inspiration and power into his soul. The key to influx is rapport, and the more understanding we have of our relation to the inner realms of being, the more powerful such rapport becomes.

This we are at last beginning to realize. What we are concerned with is the complement of that persistent exploration of the external world by science; and it is long overdue. The study of such a work

as Rosamund Harding's valuable *Anatomy of Inspiration* (1940) will reveal the fact that our knowledge of this subjective aspect of being is still pathetically rudimentary and uncertain relative to the possibilities which it has to offer to us. In fact the title of the book is really somewhat ambitious for a work which attempts no more than a preliminary and long overdue survey of an unexplored psychic continent.¹

7. Transition to the Poetic

I must now in conclusion say something regarding the effect of mystical realization in modifying the form of philosophical statement.

That logic cannot accommodate the organic, the personal and the unique, is a self-evident fact. To express oneself in terms of principles is *ipso facto* to fall outside the innermost sphere of truth. Admittedly there are certain mystical insights which can be conveyed with remarkable fidelity by that exceptionally endowed type of thinker who is capable of translating his most profound realizations into the crystalline forms of a rigorous logic—witness the achievements in this direction of such philosophers as Plotinus, Spinoza and Sankara. And in the extremely formal terms of the Scholastic Philosophy men were able to state truths which illuminate our experience in the most striking fashion. This for the reason that such thinkers were not merely intellectuals, but also profoundly religious; the basis of their intense philosophical activity was an equally intense experience of the divine within. The root of all effective expression is mystical. Once a proper contact has been established with the Centre the capacity is acquired of entering into a living relation with reality on any plane to which the attention is directed. In terms of action this means economy, rhythm, the appropriate dispensation of energy. In terms of feeling it means a discriminating type of response, the absence of sentimentality and phantasy. In terms of thought it means clarity, organic structure, penetration to the basic anatomy of the subject.

With all this, however, it remains true that by being thus translated to the plane of the purely intellectual the Mystery has been externalized to what one might almost describe as a dangerous degree; it is doubtful whether our more interior and significant experience can really be communicated in such an abstract fashion except at the price of a certain distortion. The condition of all true vision is a co-ordination between the intellectual and the passional

¹ It is a significant fact that the number of thinkers who are contributing to the orientation (in the literal sense of the term) of our occidental thought is today steadily increasing. Typical of this tendency is the remarkable pioneer work of Dr. E. Graham Howe, a Harley Street psychologist, in applying the principles of Buddhist metaphysics to the solution of the characteristically western problems of his patients. See his *I and Me*, *War Dance*, *The Triumphant Spirit*, *Invisible Anatomy*, and other works.

faculties of the spirit. And as they become integrated form and content are commensurately blended in our thinking. With all one's admiration for the achievements of philosophers in this field one must recognize that the effect of any real spiritual quickening is to produce a recoil from the intellectualization of our more mystical realizations. It is not sufficient to precipitate, as it were, the responses of the soul upon the plane of the geometrical; the heart must be permitted to declare its feelings in intimate association with the formal pronouncements of the intellect. Or rather, the truth must be enunciated from that deeper centre in which the masculine and the feminine components in the personality are in perfect equilibrium.

The exterior aspect of all phenomena is that of law; the interior aspect that of personality, or soul. The form without can be controlled by the mind; the substance within experienced by the heart as that which awakens feeling. But the higher we ascend in the scale of being the more does external form become subordinated to interior fulness and indwelling. Hence our experiences can be less and less adequately expressed in formal terms, and we are thrown back more and more upon the "language of the heart", the discourse of lovers. As a consequence we find that under the higher auspices expositions of transcendental philosophy, while not losing their clarity, become invested with a majestic and poetic quality, as if the divine life which is immanent within the formal structure was glowing within it with ever-increasing richness and brilliance. In other words, as we enter more deeply into the Mystery we realize increasingly clearly that the quantitative is only the qualitative perceived through the mode of materiality. And if we find that the formal productions of any school of religious thought lack this dissolving and redeeming radiance from the Innermost we can be assured that it has no great claim to profundity.

So we draw nearer to the subtle contours of Reality when we are able to strike the true note of intellectual passion, in which universal principles are presented to us in such close unity with living and concrete imagery that the critic is unable to decide whether he is confronted with poetry or philosophy—as, for example, in the more exalted passages of such a writer as Coleridge or Newman. The whole nature of the personality is able to declare itself without any sacrifice in either direction. The vision is truly organic.

The impulse to achieve a synthesis of this order is, I would maintain, the natural and inevitable outcome of the unfolding of the deeper spiritual consciousness. It is not simply a question of tastes and preferences; the soul comes to reject more and more vehemently any statement about life in which the equilibrium between form and substance is not properly maintained. A correct but arid intellectualism becomes for it no less a distortion of truth

than an undisciplined emotionalism. The notion that a purely formal statement can be true in and for itself is now entirely unacceptable to the mind.

8. *The Alphabet of Truth*

Finally, we must consider for a moment the effect of interior realization in transforming our general scheme of philosophy. In an earlier chapter I have already argued that we cannot give an adequate philosophical account of our normal experience unless we do full justice to the element of personality. The corresponding demand at this point is that we should rise from the plane of philosophical conceptions to that of what can best be described as mystical theology. And this means that instead of translating our spiritual apprehensions into external, and therefore misleading and impoverished, terms we must be sufficiently venturesome, uniting heart and head, to express them in a more symbolical fashion.

Even the ensoulment of the prosaic is no longer adequate for our purposes. From poeticized philosophy we pass into a still more intimate region in which the poetic is the dominant factor, the philosophic exercising the function of its interior anatomy. Thus the highest and most decisive illuminations are those conveyed by nature and art in terms of the concrete. For it is only in relation to the concrete that we can have truly organic experience, that experience in which the three radical elements in our being, love, understanding and will, are brought into creative association together. And this means that for a more complete revelation than that afforded by science and philosophy we must turn to art. For in art a mass of facts are presented to us, not in terms of analysis, but as they are fused into a revealing order by the poetic vision. "

Yet we have still not reached the end of the road. Lofty as is the artist's vision, it is still—as I shall hope to show later¹—that of the man who is contemplating the reflection of the Real as it is manifested within the forms of nature. In mystical imagery, on the contrary, we are concerned with the efforts of the soul to translate into external symbols the processes of its interior realization of the divine. The forms and figures are actually those of art; but they are employed in conjunction with still deeper processes of the spirit. And it is such symbology, one must conclude, that constitutes for us the most profound language at our disposal for expressing our experience of Reality.

Our concern is now with what may be described as basic spiritual images, at once baffling to the unilluminated mind and rich

¹ See Chapter V.

with meaning for those who approach them from a mystical standpoint. And their import lies in the fact that they disarm the mere "understanding" by emanating an influence which arrests and even shames its superficial processes, and at the same time disclose to the attentive and patient mind increasing depths of truth and reality. They are, in fact, the voice of life, veiled but authentic disclosures of the great radical order of things, of the matrix on which the whole universe is built. Although what they reveal can never be fully communicated philosophically, it can be recognized, acknowledged and acted upon—but only when the aspirant after illumination has awakened within his own being the different orders of life which they shadow forth.

As all schools of spiritual wisdom have ever taught, the deepest mystical truths can be disclosed to us only through the medium of such symbolizations. The mind which is seeking illumination in this realm must be prepared to dwell upon certain figures which serve to awaken thoughts which cannot be represented in any more external terms. Their influence upon the consciousness is in one direction to arrest those relatively superficial mental processes which confine us to the periphery of true knowledge, and in the other to quicken within it certain interior realizations which persistently evade intellectual definition. Yet at the same time they provide the key to mastering experience on a more external plane.

The long ideological pilgrimage culminates, then, in a process of pure contemplation. Short of a complete transcendence of the whole world of forms, this is the nearest which we can achieve to a realization of the Ineffable. The movement is inwards from a condition of vision in which masculine form predominates over feminine substance, to one in which the emphasis is in the opposite direction. And it is the second type of illumination which provides the key to the first, and not the reverse.

I would finally suggest that, whether we understand and accept the fact or not, it is towards this order of truth that we are progressing. In other words, I believe that in so far as there is any *real* light in the different speculations, theories and interpretations which are being developed by those amongst us today who are thinking along these lines, it is only to the degree that their ideas represent confused or partial recognitions of that deeper wisdom which is embodied in the teachings of spiritual philosophy.

The more one studies the imaginative constructions of modern minds in this field, the more convinced does one become that they are really only groping their way towards certain traditional and radical realizations which have been set forth once and for all in the language of the Mysteries. The key symbols, the basic formulations, the really clarifying principles have already been imparted to humanity. Our task resolves itself into that of finding our way

back to a lost point of departure, to a pattern of thought and behaviour which, since it is eternal and inexhaustible in its potentialities, provides a sure foundation for activity in every epoch of history.

Nor is this mere speculation; it would be possible, I believe, to take one piece of modern exploration after another and show that such progress as it involves consists in a gradual approximation of the individual's thought to spiritual principles laid down at the very beginning of human civilization, and which will meet the distinctive needs of every age.

CHAPTER FOUR

ART AND REALITY

IN the course of the last few chapters we have considered the more mystical element in thought both in psychological and in philosophical terms. I now turn to the most momentous problem of all: that which confronts us in the moral realm. How are we to achieve that identification with the Within which will ensure our effective control over the forces with which life calls upon us to struggle?

It has already appeared that in respect of this life and death question we cannot expect anything from a purely mechanistic philosophy. And with this we are naturally led to consider the claims of Humanism, which are certainly not lightly to be put aside. To examine them here in detail is of course out of the question; I must content myself with reproducing in a summary form an argument which I have already advanced in another volume.

1. *The Standards of Humanism*

To see the problems raised by Humanism in their proper perspective we must take the long-term view. We must recognize that not only individuals, but also groups and even nations can be powerfully sustained for lengthy periods by their "native" resources without experiencing any need to turn to a deeper level for inspiration and strength, or even apparently suffering seriously for not doing so. Thus we meet with grand, golden human personalities, who are consciously indifferent to religion, but who yet do a wonderful work in the world to the day of their death.

And Russia is today demonstrating to us how a whole nation can carry out stupendous tasks on the basis of a nominally materialistic philosophy. These facts the religious thinker fully accepts. But he contends nevertheless that in the end men have to come to terms with a wider universe. And he suggests in particular that those who are relying in this fashion on their higher human impulses are far more than they suspect living upon a dwindling religious capital which will one day have to be built up anew at the cost of much pain and sacrifice.

All this relates more to what is best described, perhaps, as humanitarianism. With Humanism proper—by which I mean the philosophical organization of impulses on this plane—we become concerned with something more formidable, which on account of its dignity and charm constitutes a very much more serious alternative to the religious way of life.

If we consider the vast treasury of mortal experience which has been gathered up, recorded and perpetuated in the best tradition of Humanism, the poetry, philosophy and wisdom with which its literature is impregnated, and the great institutions which draw their inspiration from its spirit, we may well hesitate before dedicating ourselves to the hazardous enterprise of pressing forward to a still higher mode of consciousness. For is it not Humanism itself which sounds in our ears an admonitory *festina lente*?

Let there be no mistake: the true humanist (I have nothing to say here of humanism as a pretentious pose) is an impressive figure, and this particularly in relation to the sort of attitude to life which has been analysed in these pages. For does not his sagacity lie just in the fact that, while respecting reason, he has a shrewd understanding of where its manipulations break down, committing us to the deliverances of instinct and intuition? Does he not pay a generous respect to the sound and subtle findings of the heart, which are always disconcerting the over-confident calculations of the head?

Well, it must be freely admitted that the essence of a mature humanism lies essentially in the fact that it takes account of a wider range of factors than those which an unimaginative logic is capable of respecting. Yet all the same, just because it is humanistic and not *spiritual* wisdom, at a certain point it fails us. For all its ripeness and judiciousness, it is invested with a conservative, negative and earthbound quality which leaves us ultimately dissatisfied. Although the best type of humanist cannot easily be deceived by the specious, the superficial or the undisciplined, although he knows how to wait in patience, to build and to forgive, although at his best he is humble and resigned, although he places all experiences and theories against a wider and sobering background,

it remains true that his balance is achieved at the cost of failing to unfold those qualities of enthusiasm and faith which, "dangerous" though they may be, are basic for the higher life of the spirit.

Moderation and balance alone cannot suffice us. The characteristic attempts of the humanistic thinker to translate what are essentially mystical problems to the plane of philosophy and ethics inevitably cuts him off from the deeper sources of creative life. And he is no less cut off from them by that tendency to egocentricity which is unavoidably induced by reliance on the judgment and the moral will instead of upon an inward surrender to a transcendental Power. We have in this matter to give due respect to the great testimony of religion that the distractions and seductions of the senses can finally be overcome only by the higher equivalent of passion, which is the electric, transforming power of the Spirit. That cultivation of the Within with which religion at its best is concerned is not merely humanizing in its effects; it makes also for a positive transformation of even our enlightened conceptions of the world around us; it ultimately brings us into immediate and living association with those mysteries and creative forces which Humanism wisely allows for, and respects from a distance, but has no close acquaintance with directly. And in the realm of cosmic knowledge it also opens the doors to vast realms of supersensible existence into which the humanist has no capacity, and usually no desire, to penetrate. For what he fundamentally stands for is the wise ordering of our earthly experience, and not that elevation of the whole plane of our consciousness which is demanded of the soul by religion.

Humanism, dignified as it is as a philosophy, must be considered as representing only a half-way house, a transitional phase of discipline and realization which shuts us out equally from Heaven and Hell. Paradoxically enough, those who are taking but the first steps in achieving true spiritual inwardness are, with all their immaturity, nearer to solving the problem of creativeness than are others who far excel them in that human wisdom which masters our limited terrestrial situation at the cost of a disinclination to seek the transcendental keys which would finally release us from our space-time prison. For salvation and liberation can come only from that transformation of life which are the fruit of intense courage and faith, directed to unseen things.

The romantic humanist, it is true, presents us with a more encouraging attitude to the problem. Through his exaltation of the Poetic Reason and his insistence on the need to synthesize intellect and emotion in a mode which classicism denies, he is evidently, in spite of the extravagances to which his attitude exposes him, much nearer to the central creative fire. But his extreme responsiveness to the world of the senses, even though

It is the secret of his strength, invites all sorts of perils with which he is rarely able to cope. He is unwilling to submit to the mystical ordeal of renouncing Nature in order to relate himself to her again in true spiritual freedom.

We must also here take account of the relation between the knowledge gained on the plane of humanistic culture and that derived from the contemplation of the Within. Here I would distinguish between what I have described elsewhere as central, and peripheral spiritualization. There are some who begin their lives with an intense order of interior realization, and have to learn, painfully and uncertainly, to relate their sense knowledge to that point of light of which they are conscious within. The child of light (we are not discussing the undeveloped soul), transcendently awakened and terrestrially unsophisticated, is prone either to live within an inner citadel and leave his or her outer life unredeemed by transforming association with the Within, or to make the most foolish, ill-conceived and naive attempts to connect it with that more profound realm of being to which he is natively attuned. But at least he has from the beginning a secure foundation on which to build.

The case of the externally sensitive individual, of the type which we think of as an "artist in life", offers a more subtle problem. For here the mind tends always to be perplexed and dazzled by the range and variety of spiritual manifestations of which it has become conscious. Danger lies first of all in seduction by the multitude of fascinating images which are revealed to such discerning vision—and then in that inner emptiness and despair in which all sensationalism, even if it is of this elevated type, finally issues. It is the classic problem of the "rich man" who can achieve inward (as opposed to phenomenalist) association with Reality only by subjecting himself to an asceticism which is proportionate to the extent and magnificence of the spiritual domain in which he has established himself. Until it has for a season become for him a Waste Land he cannot possess it in freedom.

There is, however, this compensation. The path of the highly conscious individual involves a long and scrupulous examination of one's own states of mind, a slowly acquired mastery in distinguishing between genuine and spurious feelings and responses. There is a patient surrender to all modes of experience, with the result that every moment of clarification and elevation is really won through to in a true sense, so that it appears as the final and liberating phase of a thorough exploration and derives its intensity and lucidity from the very completeness with which the soul has previously submitted to a chaos of distracting and unresolved impressions and ideas. Hence, when the pilgrim of this type finally reaches the point of making certain simple and central know-

ledgments they may be expected to be authentic; they are distilled from experience and not idealistically embraced in advance of it. He makes his final affirmations with a full consciousness of the background against which they appear.

When such an individual comes, say, to recognizing the significance of the principle of redemption, he will do so, not sentimentally, rhetorically or prophetically, but with a full consciousness of such factors as the extent of that which has to be redeemed, the immense difficulty and length of the process, and the precariousness of all such realizations. His findings will be true siftings which have been passed through the fine sieve of criticism and experience.

2. Artist and Mystic -

We have to conclude that the purely humanistic attitude to experience cannot in the end satisfy us. But this does not mean that we can proceed directly to investigating the claims of a religious philosophy of life. For there must first be considered the significance of a type of personality who is evidently in many respects much nearer than is the humanist to creating that synthesis between subjective and objective on which all creative activity depends. I refer, of course, to the artist, in whom energy and responsiveness, affirmation and surrender, objective control and subjective passivity, are conjoined to an outstanding degree.

The attitude which I am adopting towards the artist in what follows is in many respects critical. And this, of course, amounts in a sense to a sort of blasphemy. For the debt which we owe to all those who create in this field is so enormous that it may well appear unpardonably presumptuous to say anything tending to diminish the importance of what he is giving to the world. All I can observe is that the reservations which I here find myself obliged to make are advanced solely in relation to a high type of spiritual attainment: that of the sincere aspirant to mystical realization. In respect of all other considerations I simply unite with all other worshippers of truth and beauty in thanking Heaven for the benedictions which are given to us through this particular channel.

Yet with all this, from the transcendental standpoint we cannot regard the vision of the artist as ultimate. There are still more lofty possibilities before us to which we must do full justice if we wish to see the problem in its proper perspective.

Let us begin by recognizing frankly that in this particular epoch we are presented with every possible temptation in the way of over-estimating the artist's contribution to culture. We are living in an age in which men have justifiably enough largely lost

faith in religion as it is interpreted to them by the orthodox churches. Our culture has been powerfully secularized—a necessary stage of transition in emancipating ourselves from outworn theological and metaphysical conceptions as a preparation for new and more emancipated modes of realization. And in the process we have momentarily deprived ourselves of those high and potent symbols on which our deeper feelings should normally be discharged. Hence, as an inescapable result, the role of the artist in society has been exalted to an inordinate degree, and he has been invested with a spiritual function which, in spite of his high calling, he is really incapable of performing with any completeness. He does not effect in its fulness that mediation between heaven and earth on which our existence as incarnated spiritual beings depends. We are making excessive demands upon him by which both he and we ourselves are secretly embarrassed. We have exalted the subordinate to the primary, and with dangerous results.

We may recognize freely that in respect to the *content* of the artist's knowledge he is sensitive just to those elements in our experience to which both the man of science and even the humanistic philosopher tend, as has appeared, to be dangerously indifferent. But we are now discussing, not the marks of a superior form of awareness, but the deeper question of the way in which it can be made a fundamental possession of the soul. And here the first and the most obvious limitation of the artist lies in the notorious lack of discipline which so often prevails in his personal life. Exceptional cases apart, his creations are achieved primarily on the imaginative rather than on the moral plane. He affirms, describes and interprets, not out of a perfected inner attainment, but out of his intuitive and inspirational capacity¹ for associating himself with Reality. Although he perceives and comprehends truly, it is by a process of participation in something which lies actually ahead of his being. His vision is proleptic, attained to by a strange and wonderful faculty for identification with that in which he has not yet fully established himself spiritually. Although it may seem a hard saying, one must affirm that in most cases he speaks and acts out of that which he has yet, with great labour and suffering, to become.¹

What is entailed is certainly very much more than a mere echo or reflex of truth, for there is undoubtedly a notable attainment involved in achieving such instrumentality. Yet in spite of all the formidable sacrifices and disciplines entailed in a sincere dedication to art, the fact remains that the ordeal to which the individual is submitting is less fundamental and severe than that demanded of the person who is seeking to control, not only the creations of his imagination, but the processes of his own soul.

¹ Cf. Heine: "The pen of the genius is greater than he is himself."

As a result the personality of the artist is in almost all cases dangerously fluid and instable. Although he can rise to great heights he can fall equally easily into corresponding depths. He has rarely any effective means of resisting moods of violence, eroticism, melancholy and excitability, which can render both his own existence and that of those around him a misery. Although in the sphere of human relations his trained perception and delicate discrimination enable him to see deeply into the soul, the love which is awakened in him as a result can all too easily turn into its opposite, for the sufficient reason that he has developed no equivalent technique for controlling his emotional reactions. Further, he is afflicted by the serious shortcomings that he can identify himself with truth, peace and harmony most securely only when they are objectified by his creative will in an object outside himself. Whatever is precariously established within must be reinforced by something reflected back to him from without.

And this means that in spite of all the brilliance of his achievements he cannot be considered to be a master of life in the fullest sense of the term. We have already seen earlier that the scriptures are for the most part silent about beauty. And we may observe also that in none of the great religions has artistic performance, however exalted, ever been regarded as being by itself a qualification for sainthood, to attain which a man must dedicate his inmost being to the Light—and usually for a season sacrifice on the way the satisfaction of exercising his finer talents. For the root of the matter, considered from this lofty point of view, is not the imagination but the *moral will*, which creates a situation which in the end ensures every subordinate type of manifestation. Hence, whereas the artist is always liable to be overcome at a certain point by a sense of insecurity and interior inadequacy, and is driven as a result to turn within for illumination, in the case of the mystic that which is already interiorly possessed contains within itself a principle of irresistible and boundless expansion and becomes finally the source of command over the world of phenomena.¹

All this may serve to throw light upon a familiar situation which many yet find perplexing. Why is it that the brilliantly creative artist appears to be so impressive and powerful, while the aspirant after interior illumination is usually so inconspicuous and, to the superficial eye at least, so negligible a figure? The answer can only be that the first is contemplating a high order of beauty and truth as it is displayed before our eyes in the forms

¹ The following remarks by Henry Miller (*The Colossus of Maroussi*, pp. 196-7) are worth pondering in this connection: "The life of the artist, his devotion to art, is the highest and the last phase of egotism in man. . . . It seems clear to me that I shall pass from art to life, to exemplify whatever I have mastered through art by my living. . . . Art, like religion, it now seems to me, is only a preparation, an initiation into the way of life. The goal is liberation, freedom, which means assuming greater responsibility. To continue writing beyond the point of self-realization seems futile and arresting."

of the outer world, and that the second is at this particular stage associated with it only secretly and interiorly in terms of his inner being. Hence to almost everybody it is the artist who has really brought Heaven down to Earth; we can all see so clearly what he has achieved!

Under his inspired touch the latent spiritual life within all outer forms comes magically into manifestation. With his unique aid we are enabled to perceive the wonder and glory which are all the time around us, and as a result we are released, invigorated, initiated into a new, exciting and deeply satisfying mode of awareness. Art, so far from embellishing or enhancing life, reveals to us, at the cost of a great discipline, its real nature. And that revelation is so tremendous that—given that we have submitted to the lesser, but exacting, discipline of making ourselves receptive to its disclosures—it is only natural that there are moments when the artist appears to us as being little less than a god.

To expatiate any further on this theme, however, is obviously superfluous. We are all in this era so acutely conscious of what we owe to art that we can simply take this recognition for granted. But with our relation to religion the case is obviously widely different. There are still only comparatively few amongst us today who fully appreciate the nature of the undertaking to which the true mystical seeker is dedicated, and its momentous importance for the world. For, as I say, we can scarcely escape being dazzled by outward and visible spiritual achievement, and at the same time betraying a dangerous insensitiveness towards a more interior, yet even more significant, order of attainment.

Until certain deep realizations have been attained to, the achievement involved in really discriminating, full-blooded and responsive living appears to be so overwhelmingly important that it is almost fantastic to question its significance. What could be more exciting, satisfying and real than discerning and abundant experience of the great world into which we have all been born? And this being so, must not we regard the artists as our master guides and leaders in this field?

With a full acknowledgment of these claims, however, religion has always also insisted on the fact that all these delights can be enjoyed with impunity only if we surrender ourselves equally unreservedly to achievement in the realm of the purely spiritual. But this involves for a long period—and the fact cannot be done away with—what can only be described as life-denying activity, which to the uninitiated inevitably seems far less real and creative than dedication to the vital and stimulating purposes of art.

Sacrifice, abstention, forgiveness, non-fulfilment, deprivation, resignation, frustration—all of which are essential for true spiritual self-discovery—are elements in our experience which by their

very nature can be appreciated only by those who have already been awakened to the significance of the religious life. Infinitely potent for the future, they appear only as negative and unproductive to the soul which is stirred by the energy and splendour of the imaginatively realized world of manifestation. And the artist who is himself called upon to submit to such ordeals is in almost all cases driven to distraction and despair. While he will go through almost any trials in the cause of self-expression, its denial appears to him almost always as being senseless, wasteful and completely intolerable. For he can associate himself with the Mystery almost exclusively through the mode of outward activity.

It is by considering this limitation that we may by contrast gain some realization of the significance of true mystical attainment. For in spite of their unpretentious and obscure character the labours of the sincere seeker after interior emancipation may really be described as fundamental. This is simply because no activity can be more radical than that of taking even the first modest steps towards building up a transcendental centre of being within. And although that centre is for a long time insufficiently powerful to irradiate and transform the aspirant's more external personality, its existence within the depths of his soul is a tremendous fact, not only for himself, but for the world. For he has created that foundation on which all else will in time be built. It will make ultimately, in fact, for a vision even of the physical world which is more clear and discriminating than that of those who concentrate upon it immediately. For what can contend with that which is directly of the Spirit?

3. *The Sensory Revelation*

And now to consider some of the respects in which the artist's attainment is limited through his incomplete identification with the Within.

The first point which I would here emphasize is that through his powerful disposition to contemplate reality exclusively through the medium of the physical senses he is fatally cut off from that conscious association with the great realm of the supersensible which is so essential for the maintenance of the spiritual life—and particularly of the spiritual life of sensitive people. For his intense responsiveness to the visible world is usually developed at the price of either indifference to, or fear of, the Unseen, which he more or less vaguely regards as offering a threat to that realm of clear, bright and distinct forms in which art achieves its triumphs.

Yet his reluctance to extend in this manner the dimensions of his universe is after all comprehensible enough. For he can appeal

in support of his attitude to an impressive range of philosophies, either poetically or formally expressed, which unite in conceiving the mighty physical universe as the region in which Spirit finds its natural and appropriate sphere of objectification. Regarded from this standpoint, the Word is made Flesh most typically and satisfyingly in the realm of three-dimensional existence. There may perhaps be intermediate spheres of being, but they constitute only nebulous or functionless equivalents of that concentrated zone of reality into which we are born; or even if they are of a higher spiritual order than that of this world they are either irrelevant to our immediate destiny as incarnated beings or inaccessible as objects of experience. Our fundamental obligation is to realize the Eternal here and now in terms of arduous and exacting physical life. Any extension of the field within which we have been called upon to work out the great ultimate problems of existence is either illegitimate, phantastic or wasteful. The physical universe in all its magnificent vastness and intricacy not only provides us with the setting of which we are at present in need for the unfoldment of our latent powers, but it is the appointed arena for our struggles. Only on the screen constituted by physical experience do the images thrown forth from the Within appear in their proper definition and focus. Only through the lens of the senses can we see things as they are.

Let us do full justice to this position. It is certainly true that the structure of our terrestrial experience is such that within its limits we can at least attain to all the great metaphysical realizations necessary for laying the foundations of our spiritual life. We cannot, without entering into mystical ecstasy, draw back with any completeness the veil that hides from us the deeper mysteries of cosmic creation. We cannot, while confined to the body, gain more than a preliminary notion of the spiritual forces at work around us. But we can undoubtedly attain to a real insight regarding such vital questions as the essential nature of our relation to the great I AM, to the natural realm and to our fellow-men. The world, we must believe, is so arranged that the grand basic principles governing all planes of being are decisively exhibited even on the most physical level of existence. And this is only another way of saying that, in spite of the completeness of our incarnation in the body, the fundamentals of the great scheme have been placed within our reach—if we will but follow the intimations of reason and intuition without faltering by the way.

Impressive as this philosophy is, the fact remains that we cannot attain to any real emancipation from our bondage to illusion unless we turn our eyes also away from the world of the senses in the direction of the great Unseen. I do not mean that the individual need—in the early stages at least—develop his psychic

faculties and become aware directly of the invisible planes of being. (In any case one must here allow for the fact that the merely psychic may be both spiritually and culturally of negligible significance—a question which I must leave for discussion elsewhere.) But I do mean that true wisdom and power will never be at his command unless he balances his concern with the world of the senses by an equally serious concern, in terms of spiritual aspiration and contemplation, with the world of life within. And it may be added that if he does so with sufficient persistence he will ultimately come to realize that even the forms and rhythms which fascinate and exalt his spirit on the physical plane are only imperfect and limited reflections of others of a superior order which it will one day be his destiny to contemplate.

4. *The Magic Mirror*

Nor is this all. One must even go so far as to maintain that as a result of his neglect of the higher disciplines of the spirit the average artist is precluded to a considerable degree from attaining to really discerning vision even on that plane of physical experience on which he is most fully awake. In spite of all his attainments the deeper understanding is denied him.

In examining this question we must first of all consider the problems raised by the subject-matter of art. In respect to all artistic creations we have always to ask ourselves the basic question of the essential *value* of the consciousness which the artist is thus translating into form. The function of art is to record states of mind by the appropriate use of natural imagery. And so fascinating is this process of externalization that it is only too easy to lose sight of the fact that from the ethical standpoint they may be primitive or perverse. Thus a poet, through his culture and technical virtuosity, may be able to express with disciplined precision the condition of wrath, depression, ardour or cynicism in which he momentarily finds himself. The theme may be developed with full contrapuntal richness, the imagery employed organic and compulsive, so that we are deeply stirred—at the aesthetic spectacle provided for us. But it remains true that in another class of literature—that “dry bread” with which the religious seeker nourishes his spirit—*moods*, however lyrical and fascinating they may be, are strongly discouraged! The ideal set before the aspirant is strict emotional control, the ultimate fruit of which is a higher manifestation of power than the poet is capable of achieving. And much the same view is taken in the psychological clinic—for comprehensible enough reasons. For it is plain that attainment in this field is more radical than any mastery of the art of translating

whatever happens to be alive in one's being into expressive form. But so magnetized are we by the technique of expression that the essential element in the situation is recognized only by the few. We not only take it for granted that the creator must be "temperamental" often to an intolerable degree, but if we are not careful we measure his sentiments largely in terms of the perfection with which they are recorded.

Another way in which the interior inadequacy of the imaginative personality finds expression in this sphere is in the field of criticism. The relation of the artist to the realm of the Spirit is normally most appropriately expressed in displaying the character of reality in so far as it is reflected in natural forms. But we have also to take account of those cases in which the poet concerns himself directly with the underlying symbolism, and seeks to interpret it to us. I am thinking here of the attempts of mystically-minded thinkers to convey to us the spiritual significance of romantic literature, as exemplified, for instance, by the studies of Professor Wilson Knight, and the labours of a host of commentators on Blake. And then on a still more transcendental plane we find such critics turning their attention to the symbolical, not as it is expressed in the imagery of poetry, but as it appears in an organized and philosophical form in various traditional systems—D. H. Lawrence expounding in his extremely individual fashion the principles of *yoga*; W. B. Yeats interpreting to us the Hindu scriptures; studies from different hands of the symbology of the Tarot Cards, the Kabbalistic Tree of Life, the Chinese Trigrams, etc.

But because such writers are thus anticipating a more profound experience which lies further ahead, they introduce us for the most part into a curious and perplexing atmosphere of excitement and confusion. We do indubitably find ourselves in the midst of profound and portentous realities, but in the end, in spite of all our sympathy, we are baffled and exhausted by what has been presented to us. Or again, we are overcome by an uneasy feeling that the author is moving too confidently and easily about this fascinating and glamorous region and being seduced by the imaginative vistas which it opens up before him. And this fact is, unfortunately, accepted by the average reader, without undue protestation.

For the cultivated person, at least, the literature of the spiritual tends to be unduly confined to the dramatic, the "interesting" and the apocalyptic. He studies with avidity researches into mythology, mysticism, esotericism and the records of our transactions with the Unseen. And on the emotional plane he responds to all that is typified by the powerful writings of Blake. He will read Boehme if the reflections of that great mystic on the arcana of Nature are sufficiently poetic and dramatic, but is unlikely to be

moved by his sober *Dialogues on the Supersensual Life*. He will be intrigued by *yoga*, but pay insufficient attention to the fact that the cultivation of certain relatively dull and solid qualities is laid down as the prerequisite of its practice. At the worst he will read the Bible for its literary style.

What minds of this type desire to contemplate are spiritual ideas in, as it were, their nakedness and isolation. They delight in the brilliant and intimidating play of cosmic forces on their own plane, the display of the great elemental powers active within Nature and the soul, the representation in their overpowering purity and definition of the great archetypal forms. And such concern with high philosophy has, of course, its place. Yet at the same time we have to recognize that what may be described as "literary mysticism" has a largely spurious quality. At the best it represents only an early stage in the search for transcendental reality—that stage at which the mystic quest can be romanticized, treated as a "cultural" manifestation, made the subject of "imaginative" exposition.

But the principle remains that any preoccupation with such lofty themes *must*, if it is genuine, lead the individual sooner or later to commit himself in a more definite fashion to the spiritual life—in other words to live out the philosophy which he has embraced. If it does not, the conclusion can only be that he is seeking to enjoy the cream of religious experience without accepting its more searching implications. It works out, therefore, that concern with such problems is appropriate only to two stages of consciousness: that which leads up to a serious dedication of the soul to the mystical life; and that which follows upon the completion of the aspirant's apprenticeship. In the intermediate and toilsome phase of endeavour, resignation and service, it must be largely renounced, and the mind concentrated instead upon that relatively matter-of-fact plane of being on which such titanic forces find their conditioned but exact expression. In a word, the drama contemplated by the poetic reader on the level of art and seership is lived out by the mystic in terms of the more prosaic disciplines and commitments of corporeal existence. A whole complex of such electric transcendental forces is assuredly at work far within. But he must turn his eyes away from them for a season in order to master, rather than simply to contemplate, them. Instead of opening the watch like the child who is eager to see the works, he is content to live through the sober hours recorded on its face—until the time comes when as a result of his patience and devotion he will know the drama from within.

In the field of literature this austerity is expressed in an increasing appreciation of what to others is but "dry bread". It is itself a commonplace that the first step in religious realization is the

rediscovery of the commonplace, which consists in perceiving the significance of those plain, unassuming, seemingly obvious, but actually profound, and infinitely precious, statements which, while they are too subdued and uninviting to claim the restless attention of the sophisticated, yet help us to live, to *be*; which disclose their significance to us only when we turn to them out of need rather than out of curiosity; and which yield up an ever deeper meaning to us as we grow in purity and grace.

What it comes to is that a "romantic" interest in the spiritual is essentially premature. Normally one should not attempt to penetrate into such sacred (there is no other word) regions without a thoroughgoing moral and mystical preparation. Light upon these deep and dangerous truths should properly come *last*, as the outcome of a long process of aspiration, dedication and training. The true seeker after enlightenment regarding these ultimate problems will be content to begin at the beginning, knowing that if he perseveres real illumination will finally be accorded to him. Instead of attempting to pass the rays of truth through the prism of an enthusiastic and imaginative, but still clouded and unstable, personality he will wait for the time when he can look into these deep places with the clear and serene eyes of the spirit.

Such is the classical doctrine, and although it may appear as forbidding or even as intolerably "superior" to the characteristically modern type of spiritual adventurer, it is difficult to see how we can escape the obligations which it imposes upon us. The literary approach to experience is completely adequate and satisfying—provided that it is confined to concern with the underlying mysteries in so far as they are reflected in the great drama of life as it is naturally known to us through the senses! But if we wish to draw back the Veil we must be prepared to pay a higher price. Otherwise the result will be illusion of the most dangerous type—that illusion which is created only when the more profound truths have become so inextricably intertwined with their corresponding distortions that only the wisest spirits can find their way along the narrow and winding path leading out of the resulting labyrinth into the light.

Apart, however, from the sort of shortcomings which we have just been discussing we must finally consider a still deeper aspect of the question: the fact that even when artistic creation and appreciation are achieved on a high plane they are still subject to the limitations imposed by the distinctive nature of the artist's apprehension—the fact that he is contemplating reality primarily through the medium of the physical senses. For we have to reckon with the fact that the intrinsic nature of his vision implies a certain exclusion from the sphere of truth. Although by uniting his more exalted inward illuminations with his most immediate and living

experience he has advanced in this matter a long way beyond the scientist and the formal philosopher, there yet still remains a veil between his eyes and truth. And it is constituted by the subtle sensuality to which he is subject through the fact that he is attempting, while still fascinated by the life of the senses, to pierce to that which lies behind it. He has not yet fulfilled the final and most severe condition which is imposed upon the seeker after truth—that of turning away from Nature in order to see truly into her depths.

As a result even when his vision is on the spiritual plane he fails to attain to what can really be described as illumination in the full sense of the term. Although he responds with extreme sensitiveness to every type of mystical and occult condition he is unable to penetrate to the ultimate spiritual origin of the manifestation by which he is moved. He finds himself continually in the *presence* of hidden realities, but apprehends them only to the degree that they are mirrored forth in the forms of the natural world. He can convey to us perfectly the *effects* produced by all kinds of invisible and transcendental influences, can read infallibly the tokens and symbols of destiny, desolation, austerity, grace, treachery, freedom or joy, but can never gain a vision of those secret principalities and powers of which they are the phenomenal expression.

In a word, he can read only in the mirror of sense manifestation. This means a very great deal. But it means also that he lacks that more fundamental understanding which is given to the spiritual seeker who finally attains to contemplating these mysteries from deeper within. Although introduced into the sphere of wonder and magic, he has not yet attained to full initiation.

But perhaps the most serious limitation of the artist lies in the fact that in spite of all his imagination and responsiveness he has no *control* over the manifestations which he is contemplating. Life and death, splendour and desolation, beneficence and malignity mysteriously appear and disappear before his gaze in accordance with principles which are almost entirely hidden from his understanding. He is uplifted, depressed, abandoned, comforted, the recipient of holy visitations or cruel injuries as the vicissitudes of life dictate.

And this can hardly satisfy. The obligation is clearly upon us to progress beyond a poetic and largely helpless response to such forces and to subject them in some measure to our will. What this entails I have already considered at some length in an earlier chapter.¹ The essence of the matter is that the emphasis must be shifted from the contemplation of truth and beauty to the creation, by much sacrifice and labour, of those conditions demanded

¹ II, i, 4.

for its manifestation. And this involves, of course, a passage from art to religion. Enormously important as is the experience of the artist, it yet represents only a preliminary awakening to the nature of spiritual reality, the first great disclosure of which is made to us through the physical senses in terms of beauty.

Of the majority of artists it is evidently not demanded that they should attempt to progress beyond this point. Art for them should remain a way of life, a hard and delightful discipline, a mode of self-expression which appears as being natural and sufficient in itself. But there are others for whom it is the first phase of a deeper dedication. Their experience leads them steadily onwards towards a more ultimate order of realization. Superficially considered, their work may appear simply as a contribution to literature, music or painting. But in reality it has a more profound import. They are not only observing and recording, but following a Way. There comes for them a stage at which they can no longer be content with what is really a precarious and transitory association with reality; they perceive that in order to attain true peace and control they must identify themselves with it in a more radical fashion, and not simply as it is reflected back to them through the myriad experiences provided through the physical senses. And it is at this point that they may be truly said to have set their feet on the path of mystical self-realization.

It must finally be observed that when at length the artist reaches the stage of expressing his consciousness once more from a new and deeper centre, it will necessarily be through the powers which he has made his own. This principle is of great importance, and for the following reason. There is an almost inescapable tendency to establish a sharp separation between the highly æsthetic character of artistic activities and the relatively dreary and mechanical business of improving our social and economic arrangements. And this is accentuated by the fact that on the one hand art as at present conceived and practised is not, for reasons which have been already suggested, co-ordinated with the wider purposes of life, and that on the other our thinking in this field involves in so many respects, as we have seen earlier, a deep denial of our finer instincts and intuitions.

But the gap can be bridged, and in this way. It is possible to perform a profound and creative work for society *on the spiritual plane*. By this I mean that men and women who have reached the point of believing in the reality of the finer order of cosmic forces can unite in directing them for the welfare of their fellow-men, and thus lay the necessary invisible foundation for the labour which is being done in this field by those who are working in a more exterior mode.

It is the mark of such more refined and concentrated activity

that it provides a very complete satisfaction to those superior faculties and perceptions which cannot be brought so directly into play in the ordinary work of social reconstruction. And this means that those artists and poets amongst us who wish to play their part in building the future *by employing their distinctive capacities* are offered—if they can only reach the point of believing in the reality of such operations—an adequate opportunity for expressing their powers in aiding humanity. They can serve by giving to the world, not only of their best, but of their highest as well.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE RELIGION OF TOMORROW

WE have now considered the difficult and important situation of the artist in relation to the spiritual quest, and have been obliged to conclude that he has associated himself with reality more in imaginative terms than in terms of being. The next step forward takes us inescapably in the direction of religion, of which mysticism is the most central and essential manifestation. How are we to deal with this weighty problem in the light of our modern awareness?

I. *The Meaning of Realization*

Regarding the central and fundamental element in religious experience little need be said here. Whatever the differences between sects and schools, they all agree in recognizing that the key to emancipation from bondage to the material world lies in a process which can best be described as realization, whereby the life of the individual becomes transformed by the power of the great I AM within his soul.

We are here in a realm in which all our ordinary conceptions fail us. All we can say of Spirit is that, itself beyond all description, it is known only by the effects which it produces. It is the Inner Pole, the great invisible Hub around which all revolves, the overshadowing Presence, the Essence which guarantees the harmonious accomplishing of all external processes. Although its nature cannot be grasped by the operations of the mind, it can be known by the heart. It is revealed inwardly to human beings in terms of peace and a sense of the Whole; outwardly through the senses in terms of cosmic order. And only out of its depths can the true forms and rhythms of the universe be perceived. Nothing is real in the outer

world which does not correspond to its nature. Yet that nature remains itself a Mystery.

Nevertheless, we are so constituted that it lies within our power to place ourselves mystically within the sphere of this supreme Life. But this process entails a thoroughgoing process of preparation. No deep metaphysical realizations can become really built into the soul without a long period of aspiration, patience and discipline. Just as it requires many years of training before the philosopher can move with security in a world of intellectual abstractions, the artist learn to identify forms and rhythms which are at first too evasive to be detected, or the scientist become capable of collecting and weighing evidence with absolute scrupulousness, so is it with the expert in the things of the spirit. There are certain facts about our relation to the Divine which after a long and painful period of seeking a man recognizes in his soul to be true. But once realized, they are a secure possession of which he cannot lightly be deprived.

And it may fairly be said also that the training to which the spiritual seeker is called upon to subject himself is the most arduous of all. For all other specialists are to a greater or a lesser degree concerned with data which lie within the sphere of our normal experience; it is a question in every case of taking the knowledge possessed by ordinary people and giving it a more precise and refined character. The extraordinary difficulty of acquiring authentic metaphysical knowledge, however, lies in the fact that it discloses itself only to the degree that the world of our accustomed knowledge has been transcended. We are concerned with a realm of being which, as it were, occupies the interstices between the units with which our ordinary consciousness is making its computations. And our contact with this sphere is likely for a long period to be extremely intermittent and uncertain. We are concerned with experiences which can be acquired only when the mind is not simply in a state of exceptional peace, lucidity and elevation, but also turned in an unfamiliar direction—with the corollary that such insights can be fully recaptured only when the consciousness is again momentarily raised to the same high plane.

This is true, of course, of all superior realizations; but it is consummately true of our more purely mystical apprehensions. And further we have to reckon with an element which is far less in evidence, if at all, in other branches of knowledge: the fact that for a long preparatory period at least any real penetration into the sphere of spiritual reality produces a powerful negative reaction, casting the mind helplessly back into a condition of dejection, scepticism or materialism, so that in extreme cases it is even impelled to repudiate the very spiritual quest on which it originally so hopefully set forth.

As for the pilgrimage itself, it consists of a slow process of emancipation from what, in the light of higher experience, proves to be nothing else but a waking dream.

Our minds, in their lower aspect, are limited by conceptions and sympathies which are derived, in the last analysis, from the character of our bodies. As a result, we are at the mercy of the phenomenal. We think, on this external plane, in terms of change, separateness, physical space and time, while emotionally our responses are largely determined by magnetic attractions and repulsions which are ultimately biological in their origin. Hence all the restlessness, conflict, misery, and helplessness which afflict the individual who identifies himself with his sensational nature.

At the same time we have to recognize, if we are at all awakened, that in the depths of our being, we are associated with that Reality of which we have only a very incomplete and confused realization when in our more habitual and superficial states of consciousness. Our accustomed awareness represents only a strange, restricted and oppressive limitation of a much wider and far more glorious type of apprehension which is our natural heritage.

Within us all an Absolute is unremittingly exercising its influence in transforming and elevating a conditioned consciousness. There is something in the deepest centre of our personality which is incessantly engaged in destroying, radically and inexorably, yet in the sublime interests of our liberation, every type of limiting conception, response or satisfaction, on which our unregenerated personality is nourishing itself. Whether we think of it as an emanation of the Eternal, the *Atman*, the Oversoul, a spark from the Central Fire, or the activity of the Mighty I Am within us is—at the outset, at least—of little moment. What alone is of importance is that we should not identify it with that bare implicit “I” which we recognize as being present in all our mental processes and which retreats before us in an infinite regress if we attempt to seize its character. What we are concerned with is a source of creative life. And the more we listen to its intonations the nearer do we come to enjoying that release for which we are all yearning in our hearts. For this basic Principle is centred in all men equally, however much they may vary in attuning themselves to it; and that towards which it impels us is necessarily in the most exact consonance with that towards which it impels all others, however outwardly incompatible, alien or irreconcilable their activities may be. For it is the voice of the Whole, of the Self of all seemingly separated selves.

The individual who has even to a limited degree come into association with this Absolute Consciousness discovers that he has no real life except in so far as he is in some way or other harmonizing himself with the great creative forces of the universe.

And the more he does so, the less real do his personal possessions, whether material or psychological, become for him. Hence when the final point of realization is attained he finds that he has nothing left which he can claim as distinctively and creatively his own except his cosmic function as a centre of consciousness which is endowed with the capacity for assimilating, organizing and expressing experience in a unique and responsible fashion.

In so far as he gives himself up to this activity he knows freedom and serenity, whatever the external stresses and strains to which he is subjected. In so far as he attempts to repudiate it and relapses into the undifferentiated or the egocentric he suffers, and loses virtue. The most that is open to him is to maintain himself as a discriminating instrument of the creative power which is working upon him and which, since it is spiritual, enhances instead of obliterating his personality. He becomes as nothing, but only thereby to become all.

2. *Ways and Means*

Up to this point the issues have been relatively straightforward. We have been engaged only with principles which, as I have already indicated, are recognized by all serious religious schools. The real difficulties begin when we attempt to consider the significance of this sublime and formidable undertaking of achieving transcendental realization when it is translated to the plane of the objective and the concrete—and particularly when the problem is worked out in the terms of our modern consciousness.

One must recognize at the outset that in respect of this great enterprise the intellectuals are not likely to be of much assistance to us. For experience shows that it is just at this point that they most seriously break down. In relation to the past they display, as we all know, a quite astonishing capacity for conducting elaborate, and often extremely efficient, autopsies upon theories and attitudes by which they have previously been misled. In relation to the present they are prone to complicate the situation by calling for excessively precise definitions and formulations, when their intuitions should properly take them directly to the heart of the problem under discussion. And in relation to the future—with which we are here concerned—they have a propensity towards indicating in prophetic phrases the general line of advance which is to be followed, but without any clear notion of what exactly their proposals imply.¹

In respect, for instance, to the problem examined in this book,

¹ "Many advocates of change," says Herbert Morrison, "devote nine-tenths of their speeches to attacking the existing system, and what they say has often an awful lot in it. But they only have a tenth of their time to spare for explaining what they would do."

one finds that the literature dealing with the general nature of spiritual values has of late years been steadily increasing in volume. But only in exceptional cases does one meet with writers who have made any serious attempt to consider exactly *how* this higher type of consciousness is to be brought into manifestation, and the extent to which this entails a break with traditional assumptions and practices. And yet when all the rhetoric and eloquence has done its necessary work upon our souls, this is the only task before us. We have all of us by now, if we have any imagination, a pretty clear notion of what is implied by the spiritual way of life. But we are by no means equally clear regarding the conditions which have to be fulfilled in the present age to make it a reality. While those people who have the clearest vision in this respect would seem—since the note which they strike is usually much more inspirational than intellectual—to be the least capable of dealing with the situation in terms of systematic thought.

In view of all these considerations I have written this book only as an introduction to a further work in which I shall address myself to these very concrete problems; as I say, everything reduce itself in the end to the consideration of actual ways and means. But I cannot bring the present book to a conclusion without saying something regarding the general character of the religious philosophy on which I am taking my stand.

3. *The Coming Faith*

First of all, I take it for granted that the modern seeker after spiritual truth, however revolutionary his outlook, will in all sorts of respects find himself obliged to acknowledge the great classical insights and attitudes of religion. There can be no such thing as an abrupt and unqualified repudiation of the past; the new must grow organically out of the old. And this means that what may be described as the general texture of the religious life must essentially remain the same for us; for our relation to eternal value cannot but be substantially unchanged at whatever point in space and time we are located. The grand basic elements in the spiritual life—faith, "works", aspiration, prayer, purification, regeneration, communion with the Unseen—will remain the same for us forever. But we shall be impelled to give expression to them in the light of our twentieth-century awareness.

The specific demands of the present spiritual dispensation must be unflinchingly met. To what does this commit us?

To begin with, religion, if it is to have any real potency in our modern life, must be before everything *dynamic*. We must achieve a concentrated form of inwardness sufficiently powerful to cor-

compensate for the tremendous activity which is being developed by the present generation on the more superficial levels of existence. Only if the hub is securely fixed can we hope to control the dizzy motion of the rim. The swift movement at the periphery must be balanced by a powerful intensity at the centre. We are evidently in a situation in which the traditional, pietistic and conventional, modes of religious life are no longer adequate to our needs.

The gentle diffusion of spiritual influences through the forms of nature and the creations of the poets, the mellow observances and the hallowed liturgies which we associate with the faith of our fathers—these things must be preserved, for they are fundamental elements in our relation to the Invisible. Yet there is surely no real future for religion in this era unless it can provide us with a far more immediate and living contact with the unseen realms of being than that which we owe to orthodoxy. Both in the psychological and in the cosmic realm we must truly spiritualize our experience.

To consider first the subjective aspect of this revolution, I would suggest that it will lead to a movement—already discernible among many pioneers—away from what we are accustomed to think of as “religious experience”—all that complex of emotions and attitudes fostered by traditionalism—towards what may be described as “disciplined realization”. By this I mean that the whole enterprise of spiritual self-discovery will be conducted in a more cool, scientific and deliberate fashion, appropriate to the highly conscious nature of our modern approach to experience. The aim of the spiritual director of the future will be to aid the aspirant (formerly described as the “sinner”) to build up in a responsible and intelligent fashion a centre within his own being from which he can effectively control his personality; and to do this by the wise application of cosmic principles to his particular case.

The days of preaching, sermonizing, emotional appeals, simple pastoral guidance, conventionalized devotion, and piety are obviously behind us. It is a question, rather, of learning to bring our heightened modern awareness to bear upon the supreme problem of all: that of mastering our organisms on the spiritual plane. In respect to all our religious problems we must move forward in a clearer and more electric atmosphere than that which prevails in the sanctuaries of tradition. The authority in this field is now unmistakably passing to those who are looking forward to spiritual science and not backward to tradition, to those whose attitude is experimental and liberal, and whose researches in the religious realm are organic with those which they are undertaking in all others.

As to the content of our future knowledge in this field, there will be no need, after all that I have written in these pages, to emphasize the fact that the heart of all our realizations and en-

deavours as far as the spiritual path is concerned will be mystical realization—the key to all external adaptations. Nor can there be any question of the coming religion being anything but universal in its range and content. Nothing less than a really comprehensive philosophy can satisfy us in this sphere, a philosophy which has not been developed merely defensively in order to serve the narrow purposes of this or that religious organization, but which is based upon a scientific, inspirational and really tolerant attitude to religious experience. For it is evidently the mark of our present epoch that no partial or one-sided attitude, scheme or mode of activity can any longer be of real assistance to us; on all levels, that of religion included, we must admit our unqualified interdependence, open our souls to the Whole, and then courageously follow up all the possibilities which present themselves to us as a result.

Another element in our modern religious adventure which is of fundamental significance is the emphasis which will be laid upon "works". Men and women will develop their spiritual powers before everything by positive action. Whereas in former ages the religious soul was only too often excessively concerned with his doctrinal position or his agonized personal relation to his God or his Saviour, the seeker after righteousness today will work out his salvation in terms of practical activity. Religiosity will be replaced by realistic and unpretentious labour for others under a spiritual inspiration. Further, such work will be essentially co-operative, that of the community or group, which is the basic unit of the coming dispensation. Those people who are really dedicated to the spiritual life will be recognized by the fact that they are really willing to submit to the discipline of corporate enterprise in the cause of service.

Of cardinal importance finally is the fact, to which I have already called attention in an earlier chapter,¹ that psychological adjustment is by no means the same thing as religious realization. There are many today in the West who are seeking to equilibrate the forces in their being by various techniques of meditation and *yoga*. And in doing so they usually concentrate their minds upon an absolute Centre which they conceive of as the controlling principle of manifestation. But although such contemplation is legitimate enough so far as it goes, one must on no account lose sight of the fact that man's emancipation from illusion will never be achieved unless he is prepared to respect, not only metaphysical ultimates, but also the grand and infinitely intricate structure of the spiritual cosmos.

What this means essentially is that we must show a full appreciation of the significance of cosmology in its widest sense. We

¹ I, vi, Sec. 4.

must attune ourselves, not only to the transcendental, but also to the immanent God. Nor in this matter can we be satisfied with the attitude of the more conventional nature mystic for whom the visible world is the radiant "garment of God". For although such insights are of spiritual importance they do not in the end take us very far. It is true that in the light of such vision the external world is transfigured and transformed. But the process is too general to be really *intelligible*. As long as we are concerned in this fashion with only a diffused manifestation of an indwelling Life to which we are reacting primarily emotionally, we still remain essentially uninitiated. Such realizations can only be considered as the first step towards concern with that true transcendental science which provides us with a comprehensive and inspiring picture of the symbology and structure of the great invisible universe.

What it comes to is that a religious philosophy which recognizes the Divine in its transcendental aspect, together with its expression in the world of the senses, but which yet allows for no living association for man with the vast supersensible realm which lies between these two extremes of being is inadequate to our modern spiritual needs. Man will never extricate himself from his spiritual difficulties by mysticism and psychology alone. His redemption will depend also upon his gaining a true knowledge of the laws and processes of the great invisible world by which he is surrounded. And this development, it must be emphasized, is perfectly normal and healthy. For when an individual's spiritual awareness reaches a certain degree of intensity he cannot but pass beyond this stage and awaken to the realities of the Unseen. The more responsive we are to Spirit, the less are our communications with all other forms of life impeded by the dense, insulating medium of matter. In the realm of the Innermost all are one; and this fact is reflected, not only in the beauty and external order of the phenomenal world, but also in the stimulation within us of those "supernormal" perceptions which enable us to transcend space and time and to convert external into internal association.

Of radical importance also is the fact that this extension of our consciousness is not simply a matter of acquiring supersensible knowledge and a wider cosmic perspective. There is involved also the principle of living association with multitudes of human beings who have passed beyond the Veil and who are devoting their liberated energies to aiding us in our efforts to rise above material conditions. I have already referred on an earlier page¹ to the dangers attending any attempt to despiritualize the invisible realm around us. If once we close our minds to the Unseen we are lost. Our regeneration depends to an extreme degree upon our ability

¹ I, vii.

to enter into a creative communion with those in the inner spheres of being who have gone ahead of us along the Way.

And in respect to this issue the degree of culture possessed by the individual is a factor of relatively small importance. For the kind of sensibility which is developed by the more refined and sophisticated amongst us, although it enables them to identify and discriminate between all the numberless manifestations of spiritual reality with which nature and art provide us, yet leaves them largely impotent in respect of their personal relation to the Invisible. We cannot be radically sustained by the contemplation of wisdom and beauty; our salvation depends primarily upon opening the soul inwardly to the regenerative forces which are accessible to us within. Only the most direct form of association with the life behind the Veil—available both to the simple and the learned on the same terms—will fundamentally enable the individual to harmonize the discordant forces in his being. Sophistication, on the contrary, merely complicates and refines, without radically changing, the mode in which the individual's basic attitude, illuminated or otherwise, finds expression in action and thought. Malice, compassion, melancholy, charity, scepticism, generosity, sensuality, egoism—all these qualities manifest just as they did before, with the difference only that art, scholarship and philosophy are called into the service of making them manifest. But all this can leave the soul still unawakened to that experience on which all else depends: that of living communion with the Unseen.

The innermost key to ascension is not knowledge but love. Heaven must be wedded to earth through a living and consciously maintained flow of sympathy between the discarnate and the incarnated members of the human race. The world will be transformed, not primarily by efforts in the direction of social reform, but by our drawing upon the vast reservoir of love, wisdom and power which is accessible to us through the medium of communion with the interior realms of being. Salvation will reach us essentially from the great world of light and life within.

This, it may be remarked, involves very much more than spiritualism as it is ordinarily understood—the Summerland without the higher dedications and disciplines—and leads us in fact to the exalted doctrine of Angel Communion. But this is a theme with which I cannot deal in these pages.

In conclusion I would record my personal belief that we are witnessing today the initial stage—confusing enough to the unimaginative observer, but intelligible to those who have the eyes to see—of the emergence of a new form of religion in which insights of this order will be given full scope for expression. It will be largely independent of traditional revelations. It will be once deeply mystical in its interior orientation and strictly realis

with respect to objective facts. It will emphasize equally the claims of action and quietism, respect both the practical vision of the West, and the contemplative wisdom of the East. Its priests and philosophers will do full justice both to the extensive and the intensive aspects of the universe. Those who respond to its inspiration will have a living belief in, and develop an intimate intercourse with, the great Unseen, both in its personal and its cosmic aspects. And above all, it will be a universal faith, in which full recognition is given to the diverse modes in which men of all nations and races experience the Divine.

We are here surveying a process of development which plainly can be accomplished only in the course of long centuries. But it is no less evident that the hour has struck at which we should begin to throw off the bondage of the past and turn our eyes in faith and hope towards the Light which is unmistakably breaking on the horizon, bringing with it at last the promise of RENAISSANCE.

THE END

